

philippine studies

Ateneo de Manila University • Loyola Heights, Quezon City • 1108 Philippines

Escuela Normal de Maestros

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Philippine Studies vol. 30, no. 4 (1982) 493–511

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Fri June 27 13:30:20 2008

Escuela Normal de Maestros

JAMES J. MEANY, S.J.

On 1 September 1981, the Ministry of Education and Culture celebrated what it called "the Eightieth Anniversary of the Philippine Educational System." It was indeed the celebration of the foundation of the public school system by the Americans with the inauguration of the Philippine Normal School on 1 September 1901. Still, the celebration of a mere eighty years seems strange in view of the fact that numerous Catholic schools existed throughout the Philippines for hundreds of years, some of them even from the end of the sixteenth century. Moreover, there had been a public school system and its normal school in the Philippines for quite a few years prior to 1901.

The Royal Decree of 20 December 1863 initiated the public school system of primary schools in the Philippines. The decree gave detailed instructions for the primary schools for boys and girls which were to be established throughout the archipelago and for the Normal School which was to be in Manila and would be the hub of the public school system. The Normal School was placed by the decree under the direction of the Fathers of the Society of Jesus.¹

INAUGURATION OF THE ESCUELA NORMAL

The Normal School (*Escuela Normal de Maestros de instrucción primaria*) was inaugurated 22 January 1865 in a large rented house

1. *Archives of the Philippine Province of the Society of Jesus*, Loyola House of Studies, Quezon City (APP), Escuela Normal (EN), *Copiador*, 2:21. The *Copiador* is in two volumes, the first containing programs and addresses, the second, copies of letters and reports from the EN to government and ecclesiastical authorities from 1865 to 1894

at No. 3 Calle de Palacio in Intramuros.² The Royal Decree intended the school to be for boys and primarily for boarders (internos) but rather grudgingly permitted day-scholars (externos) to be also admitted.³ It was thought then – and later confirmed by experience – that only boarders would derive full benefits from the normal school education. As a matter of fact, however, the day-scholars outnumbered the boarders throughout the existence of the Normal School. The boarders were divided into the scholars who were fully supported by the state, and the “supernumeraries” who had to pay a small monthly fee. The government paid the salaries of the Jesuit staff which consisted of five priests – the director and four professors – and three lay brothers, and also their transportation from Spain.⁴ It paid for all the furniture and equipment of the school and for its rental. By today’s standards, the amounts of money involved were all small. For example, the annual rental of the building was ₱3,000;⁵ the monthly fee paid by the supernumeraries was ₱10.⁶

To be admitted to the Normal School, an applicant had to be at least sixteen years of age and present his baptismal certificate and certificate of good conduct from his parish priest. The normal course was for three years, but a preparatory year was added for the young men who were not yet able to pursue the regular course. After having successfully completed the three years, the graduate was awarded the title of Teacher (Maestro) or of Assistant Teacher. The graduates were assigned to the levels of primary schools according to the final marks with which they graduated. Those with marks of “excellent” were assigned to Manila schools.⁷ Scholars were accepted in the Normal School from all parts of the Philippines. In a document dated 24 November 1864 from the Civil Governor of the Philippines, scholarships were allotted as fol-

2. *Copiador*, 2:55. This site is now at the corner of General Luna St. and Anda St. It was occupied after the Spanish-American War by St. Paul’s Hospital until its destruction in World War II. Today, it is an empty lot.

3. The English text of the Decree of 1863 is in *Blair and Robertson*, eds., *The Philippine Islands 1493-1898*, 50 vols. (Mandaluyong, Rizal: Cacho Hermanos, 1973), 46:74-113.

4. *Copiador*, 2:1-17.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 186.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

7. Encarnacion Alzona, *A History of Education in the Philippines 1565-1930* (Manila: University of the Philippines Press, 1932), pp. 63-65.

lows: one to each of the provinces of Antique, Bataan, Batanes, Bohol, Cagayan, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Capiz, Cavite, Ilocos Norte, Isabela, Laguna and Infanta, Leyte, Mindoro, Negros, Nueva Ecija, Nueva Vizcaya, Romblon, Samar, Surigao, Tayabas, La Union, Zambales, Zamboanga; and two or three scholarships to the provinces of Albay, Batangas, Bulacan, Cebu, Ilocos Sur, Iloilo, Manila, Pampanga, Pangasinan.⁸ Fifty scholarships were awarded at first, they were soon reduced to fifteen, and in 1894, were eliminated. Scholars were committed to teach for ten years in the public schools.⁹

PROGRAM OF STUDIES

The curriculum of the Normal School was based on a very simple principle: the normalistas would take courses in those subjects which they would be expected to teach later in the primary schools. It was as follows:

First Year: Religion, Sacred History, Spanish, Arithmetic, Good Manners, Reading and Writing.

Second Year: Religion, Spanish, Arithmetic, Geography, Reading and Writing.

Third Year: Moral, Spanish, Pedagogy, Physical and Natural Sciences, Agriculture, Reading and Writing.

In the three years: Singing, Organ, Drawing.¹⁰

RELIGION

The Religion program of the Normal School and, through the program, the religious influence of the school on the whole country, were the main values of the school for the Jesuits who conducted it. In 1880, when the need for a new building was urgent, the question of retaining the Normal school was thoroughly considered by the Superior and Consultors of the Jesuit Mission in the Philippines. The clinching argument for retaining the school was its impact on religion in the country. It was argued that the

8. APP, EN, Civil Governor to Director, 24 November 1864.

9. Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, 46:80.

10. *Copiadór*, 2, Creacion, Objeto, Organización, Resultados del Escuela Normal, pp. 245-95.

Masons were trying to control education, particularly in the primary schools, and that we should not give up such a potent instrument for evangelization. The Normal School was even called our "seminary for catechists."¹¹ Religion permeated the whole program of the Normal School. Besides the numerous classes in Sacred History, Scripture and Christian doctrine, there were many religious exercises — sermons, conferences, etc. — for the entire student body, day-scholars as well as boarders. Congregations (Sodalities) for the more exemplary and competent students were an important feature. There was the Apostleship of Prayer for all students. The daily order of the boarders was rigid from Rise at 5:00 A.M. followed by Mass to Retirement at 9:00 P.M. preceded by Examination of Conscience.¹² It is this emphasis on Religion that makes it difficult for today's educationists to conceive of the Normal School and the primary schools which it staffed as "public schools." At that time and place, however, it was not unusual, because the Spanish government, and even its anti-clerical element, looked upon the Catholic religion as a means of keeping the Filipinos loyal to Spain.¹³ Religion in a boarding school, even a public one, was a customary feature.

SPANISH

Together with the propagation of religion, the diffusion of the Spanish language throughout the Philippines was a main objective of the Escuela Normal. But this was opposed from the very beginning. In 1855 the government had appointed a Committee on Primary Instruction to consider the reorganization of the primary schools, the establishment of a normal school and the use of the Spanish language as the medium of instruction. One member of the committee, Fr. Francisco Gainza, O.P., opposed the diffusion of Spanish on the grounds that a general knowledge of Spanish in the Philippines would let in subversive political ideas and expose the people to the danger of Masonic, irreligious and immoral literature. The findings of the committee were submitted for comment

11. Pablo Pastells, S.J., *Misión de la Compañía de Jesús de Filipinas en el Siglo XIX*, 3 vols. (Barcelona, 1916), 1:334-36.

12. *Copiador*, 2:280.

13. John N. Schumacher, S.J., *Readings in Philippine Church History* (Quezon City: Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University, 1979), pp. 231-32, 253-54.

to Fr. Jose Cuevas, S.J., the Superior of the Jesuit Philippine Mission. Fr. Cuevas, in drawing up a thorough plan for the primary schools and a normal school which was later substantially adopted for the Educational Decree of 1863, refuted Fr. Gainza's objections to the use of Spanish as the medium of instruction, citing the numerous royal decrees over the past two hundred years concerning the use of Spanish in the overseas Spanish dominions, the need of a common language in the midst of the numerous native dialects and for communication between the people and the civic, ecclesiastical, judicial and military authorities. The diffusion of Spanish then became a principal objective of the Escuela Normal.¹⁴

On the numerous occasions when its success was re-assessed, the criterion used was the propagation of Spanish. Of four and one-half daily hours of class, at least two hours were devoted to Spanish. It was the only language spoken within the school. The numerous public exercises of the school were exhibitions of the students' proficiency in Spanish.¹⁵ The intense efforts of the Normal School to diffuse Spanish continued to have its opponents.

In 1880 when, as mentioned above, the retention of the Normal School was being reconsidered by the Jesuits, Fr. Juan Ricart, S.J., Superior of the Jesuit Mission, wrote to his Provincial in Spain and, after giving the reasons for the retention of the Normal School, continued:

But against this is the opinion of the majority of the regular clergy and of the peninsulars, of which the echoes have surely come to your ears from my Fr. Roman There with you is my old companion, Fr. Socius (Fr. Jaime Nonnell) who has at various times heard me exclaim: "What a sad burden the Society has taken upon itself in these islands when it maintains an institution against the very pronounced opinion of the clergy." But now that I have looked at the matter 'ex officio' and with the experience acquired in Mindanao, I say "let the Normal School proceed." There are two reasons for this opposition to the Normal School and to the diffusion of Spanish. The first and at times the principal one does not merit consideration and gives little credit to those who propose it. The second has some foundation and it is the danger that these islands run of separating from the rule of Spain, as happened in the Americas. Truly, conditions and

14. William C. Repetti, S.J., *The Philippine Mission 1859-1938* (unpublished manuscript, Manila, 1938) pp. 118-19; Pastells, *Misión*, 1:52-55.

15. *Copiador*, 2:264-71.

events here and everywhere are such that it is not surprising that subjects do not love their rulers. But this is not the fault of good and paternal laws and institutions but of those who abuse them. Whatever happens in these islands, it will always be the glory of the Society that we have assisted Spain to educate and elevate and assimilate these people, imparting its religion and its language.¹⁶

This opposition to the Normal School re-appeared, with viciousness, in 1896 and 1897 when the Philippines revolted against Spain. Part of the responsibility for the rebellious spirit was placed upon the Normal School, principally by clergymen and others in Spain itself. It was claimed, for example, that "hundreds" of the graduate teachers from the school were revolutionaries. In rebuttal, Fr. Hermenigildo Jacas, S.J., the Rector at that time of the Normal School, went through the list of 1,813 teachers and 326 assistant teachers who had graduated from the Normal School since its first graduation in 1866 and showed that of these, only 33 teachers and 50 assistant *could have been* revolutionaries.¹⁷

HANDWRITING

Their persistence and competence in the teaching of handwriting throughout the three-year curriculum, earned for the professors of the Normal School the reputation of experts in calligraphy. This reputation was to cause them much inconvenience. From shortly after the foundation of the school in 1865 until 1880, Jesuit professors were continually subpoenaed to appear, under oath, before courts of first instance not only in Manila but also in distant provinces to testify concerning the authenticity of letters and signatures in civil and criminal cases. There are numerous documents in the archives in which professors analyzed handwriting letter by letter to conclude that letters or signatures were written by the same hand or by different hands.¹⁸ This was an odious burden on the Jesuits, particularly because there were in prisons persons who claimed they were there because of Jesuits. They finally protested to the government that such a burden was contrary to their duties and rights as religious, as determined by

16. Pastells, *Misión*, 1:335.

17. Pastells, *Misión*, 3:285-87.

18. *Copiador*, 2:99-164, *passim*.

canon law and by their own Institute. In 1881, the Royal Audiencia exempted them from the burden of appearing in courts as handwriting experts and, instead, laid the burden on lay graduates of the Normal School who were teaching in public schools in the districts covered by the courts.¹⁹ That this solution to the problem was adopted is evident from letters written in 1893 by the director of the Normal School to a judge in the Manila district of Tondo who had requested permission to set up his court within the Normal School in order to have the opportunity to teach the Fathers the procedures of court. The director appealed to the decree of 1881 to show that not the Fathers but their graduates were the ones who were called to court as handwriting experts and had already so served many times with satisfaction.²⁰ It can be seen from this that the custom of assigning public school teachers to duties extraneous to their teaching profession is an old one.

PEDAGOGY

It is surprising to find only one course in Pedagogy in the curriculum. This is in contrast to today's teacher-education curricula which are replete with "professional courses." But Pedagogy was listed by the Escuela Normal among its most important and fundamental courses.²¹ Its benefits were magnified by the Practice School which was attached to the Normal. This was a part of the public school system and had an enrollment, on the average, of 250 pupils. In it the third-year normalistas practiced teaching and also took part in the administration of the school under the supervision of one of their professors. It was a proud appendage to the Normal School. Its pupils participated in the many exhibitions and "academies" which the Normal School presented to the public of Manila.²²

AGRICULTURE

The course in Agriculture was a notable feature of third year. The syllabus of the course shows that it was mostly a theoretical

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 164-67.

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 428-29.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 264.

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 273-75.

study of the "notions of agriculture," including descriptions of the plants and animals of the country and methods of caring for them. Though it could hardly be called a vocational course, yet it was a forerunner of the vocational courses on which the normal school to be later administered by the Americans placed great emphasis. It is noteworthy that the Normal School, situated near the center of the city of Manila, interested its students in the concerns and needs of the whole country.

SPORTS

There is no mention in the documents of any sports program in the Normal School. Gymnastics are not mentioned in the early curriculum but there is evidence that they were exercised in the school, at least in later years.²³ There are two curious letters in the archives which give signs of the "animal spirits" of the normalistas. In 1872, the commandant of the School of Cadets in Fort Santiago wrote to the director of the Normal School to complain of the "rumble" between some of his cadets and the normalistas when the cadets happened to be passing by the Normal School on their afternoon paseo. The military officer attributed this altercation to the normalistas and wrote that it resulted from the feud that existed between the students of the Normal School and those of the Ateneo for, he said, one of the cadets had a brother in the Ateneo. Two weeks later, the director of the Normal School replied that the matter had been investigated and that the culprits had been punished.²⁴ At that time, the School of Cadets and the Ateneo were each a few short blocks from the Normal School. Perhaps the alleged "feud" between the Normal School and the Ateneo presaged the letter which many years later in 1903, Father General Wernz wrote to Manila "concerning the unholy emulation that has arisen between the Ateneo and the Normal School" to which he added the words "the superiors of each college especially must be careful."²⁵

23. *Ibid.*, p. 464.

24. APP, EN, *Correspondence between Commandant and Director*, 29 July and 13 August 1872.

25. Arch. S.J. Miss. Assist. *Hispanicae*, p. 86.

RELATIONS WITH PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The Normal School was consulted on all matters affecting the primary schools of the Philippines. Thus it was asked for its opinion concerning requests for permits to open new schools, whether for boys or girls. The Normal Schools' recommendations were based on the regulations contained in the Royal Decree of 1863 concerning the size of the population to be served by the proposed school and its distance from the nearest established school. When local authorities complained about teachers and requested their dismissal from the service, the Normal School was asked for its recommendation. Sometimes it approved the dismissal and sometimes the retention. Complaints against teachers were based on various grounds but most often on "dereliction of duty." In general, the voluminous correspondence in the archives shows that the Fathers of the school kept in close touch with their graduates and were aware of conditions in the primary schools in all parts of the Philippines.²⁶

On two occasions, the Jesuits almost lost their places in the Normal School. At the beginning of 1871, during the revolutionary period in Spain, the Madrid government decreed that the Normal School together with all government schools, should be secularized, which would mean that it would be conducted by lay persons appointed by the Spanish government. But local authorities resisted the change and the execution of the decree was suspended.²⁷ Another and more determined attempt at the secularization of the Normal School was made in 1889 and 1890 under the direction of Señor Jose Becerra, Spanish Minister of Overseas. Becerra intended, not just that the Escuela Normal be taken out of the hands of the Jesuits, but that a new State Normal School be created, and that the present Normal School cease to exist. He wanted the new school to be staffed by professors chosen in Madrid by competitive examinations. The same method of selection would be used to appoint supervisors of the primary schools of the principal towns in the Philippines. He seemed to want primary education to be run by Spanish laymen instead of by religious and by Filipinos. Incidentally, he had the same intention with regard

26. *Copiador*, vol. 2, *passim*.

27. Pastells, *Misión*, 2:330-31.

to the School of Medicine and Pharmacy of the University of Santo Tomas. The State Budget for 1890 received from Madrid had no item for the Escuela Normal but provided for the proposed new school. This meant the dissolution of the Jesuits' Escuela Normal; but vigorous opposition from all quarters in the Philippines brought about postponements of Becerra's plans and the support of the Escuela Normal, at least temporarily, from local Philippine funds. Finally, Minister Becerra lost his position in the cabinet in Madrid. His successor, Señor Fabie was opposed to the secularization of education in the Philippines and arranged that the Normal School would be included in the budget for 1891 and the school continued as before.²⁸

DIFFERENT LOCATIONS OF THE SCHOOL

As have all Jesuit institutions in the Manila area, the Escuela Normal occupied many different sites. The first site in Intramuros was a building owned by a Mr. Francisco de P. Enriquez. Throughout their occupancy, the Jesuits of the Normal School complained to the civil authorities about the inadequacies of the building — lack of space, leaking roofs, poor drainage, etc. These comparatively minor difficulties came to an end when, in July 1880, a series of earthquakes destroyed the building. The Normal School was then moved to the villa house of the Jesuits in Santa Ana which at that time was a suburb of Manila. This site, on Herran St., was later to be known as La Ignaciana.²⁹

The facilities at Santa Ana accommodated the Normal School for six years. But conditions were very crowded; moreover, the distance from the center of Manila caused inconvenience, particularly to the day-scholars. A search was made for a site for a new building. A site was soon decided upon on the Callejon de San Antonio in Ermita near the boundary line with Malate.³⁰ Before the construction of the new building was begun, it was necessary to obtain permission from the military authorities since the site was outside of the fortified zone of the city of Manila.³¹ The new

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 176-83.

29. *Copiador*, 2:107.

30. *Ibid.*, pp. 184-185. The street on which the Normal School was located was later known as Calle del Observatorio and then Padre Faura St.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 187.

building was intended not only for the Normal School but also for the Meteorological Observatory which at that time the Jesuits managed in Intramuros. The Society of Jesus was to construct and pay for the new building. It was originally budgeted at ₱93,000. But before the building was completed, the sum was found to be insufficient and application was made for a loan of ₱24,000 from the government, with the understanding that the ₱4,000 annual rental paid by the government would be deducted from the debt until entirely paid. (The annual rental fee paid by the government had been ₱3,000 for the building in Intramuros and raised to ₱4,000 for the building in Santa Ana and remained the same for the new building in Ermita.) The sum was loaned without interest, on 10 July 1885.³² A note dated 6 August 1897 from the Auditor's Office testified that the entire loan had been repaid.³³ The Normal School was transferred from Santa Ana to the new site on 1 May 1886.³⁴

PADRE FAURA LOCATION

It will be interesting to old residents of Manila to further identify the site and building of the Normal School. Briefly, it was the building on Padre Faura St. occupied by the Ateneo from 1932 until its destruction in World War II. Padre Federico Faura, S.J. had been the director of the Observatory which, as we have seen, occupied the same premises as the Normal School in Ermita. When Padre Faura died in 1897, the street on which the Normal School was located, was renamed in his honor.³⁵ When the Normal School ceased to exist in 1905, its building on Padre Faura St. became the Seminary of San Francisco Javier which, a few years later, was renamed San Jose Seminary. The same building also housed the Jesuit novitiate. The Ateneo building in Intramuros was burnt down in 1932. In order to have a building for the displaced Ateneo, San Jose Seminary was transferred from its Padre Faura building to the Jesuit Mission House in Intramuros, where it remained until its new building in Balintawak was completed; the

32. Ibid., pp. 230-31.

33. APP, EN, 6 August 1897.

34. *Copiador*, 2:231-32.

35. Pastells, *Misión*, 3:37.

Jesuit novitiate was transferred to the Jesuit villa house in Santa Ana, where it remained until its new building was completed in Novaliches. The Ateneo moved into the Padre Faura building. This building, with the Observatory, was destroyed in World War II. Shortly after the war, the Ateneo reoccupied the Padre Faura site in quonset huts and other temporary quarters. In 1952, the Ateneo moved to its new site at Loyola Heights, Quezon City, and in 1969 its professional schools to Makati. The chapel of the Ateneo Law College, the chapel of St. Thomas More, is still on the old site of the Normal School on Padre Faura St. and is administered by Jesuits. The chapel is at the approximate location of the front entrance of the old Normal School and of the pre-War Ateneo.

In 1888, the Normal School was dislocated for a short time. A cholera epidemic threatened Manila and the director of the Normal School was requested to let the school serve as a hospital. Some Sisters of Charity came to serve as nurses and some of the Jesuits remained as chaplains. Classes were suspended for the duration of the epidemic and the students were dispersed, some of them to their homes and others to the villa house in Santa Ana or to the Ateneo de Manila. It is reported that only ten cholera victims were treated in the Normal School, of whom nine died. The epidemic soon ended and regular classes were resumed on 1 September 1888.³⁶

In 1894, there was inaugurated in the Normal School "The Pedagogical Academy." The Academy was intended for the further professional and religious formation of primary school teachers in the public schools of Manila and suburbs and of adjacent provinces. Its official organ was the *Boletín Oficial del Magisterio*.³⁷ Both the Academy and the Bulletin existed for only a few years but seem to have been a successful experiment in "in-service training."

NORMAL SCHOOLS FOR WOMEN

The Normal School had been the first in the Philippines and served the whole archipelago. It was for men only. In the Manila

36. Pastells, *Misión*, 2:169-70.

37. Repetti, *Philippine Mission*, pp. 135-36; Alzona, *History of Education*, pp. 76-77.

area, a number of colleges for women — La Concordia, Santa Rosa, Santa Catalina — and the Escuela Municipal had abbreviated normal courses. Their graduates could appear before a Board of Examiners appointed by the government, of which the Director of the Normal School was a member and secretary, and, if approved acquire the title of Maestra for primary instruction.³⁸ In 1871, the first complete Normal School for women in the Philippines was inaugurated in Nueva Caceres which included the provinces of Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Albay, Masbate and Tayabas. The bishop of Nueva Caceres at the time, who founded the new normal school, was Msgr. Francisco Gainza, O.P., the same who had opposed the diffusion of Spanish through the Escuela Normal in Manila; his normal school in Nueva Caceres, and the primary schools which it staffed, now diffused Spanish throughout his diocese. The College of Santa Isabel, conducted by the Sisters of Charity in Naga, Camarines Sur, was constituted the Normal School. It was very successful, providing women teachers for almost all the primary schools of Nueva Caceres, and was considered the model normal school for women in the Philippines.³⁹ In 1892, the Augustinian Sisters of the Assumption, who were conducting outstanding normal schools in Spain and France, were invited by the Spanish government to open a Normal School for women in Manila. They had a normal school for a short time in Intramuros and then at a new site in Malate, on a piece of land adjoining that of the Jesuits' Normal School.

“SUPERIOR” NORMAL SCHOOL

This school of the Assumption was designated a *Superior* Normal School.⁴⁰ This prompted the Jesuits in 1893 to seek the same title of “Superior” for their Normal School. In order to be a Superior Normal School, their Normal School converted its Preparatory Year, which we have mentioned above, into the first of the ordinary three-year course for the title of Maestro, leaving a fourth year to be required for the Superior normal course. The

38. Alzona, *History of Education*, p. 79.

39. Evergisto Bazaco, O.P., *History of Education in the Philippines* (Manila: University of Santo Tomas Press, 1953), pp. 268-72.

40. Alzona, *History of Education*, pp. 83-91; *Copiador*, 2:462.

entire curriculum was enriched, and only the students with a rating of "Excellent" in the comprehensive examination (the *reválida*) at the end of the ordinary three-year course, were permitted to advance to the fourth year of the Superior normal course. Though designated "superior," the entire normal school was still only for the formation of elementary school teachers. The graduates were to be given all the prerogatives and emoluments of graduates of normal schools in peninsular Spain, to be appointed to teach in public primary schools of the higher ranks and to be eligible for appointment, through competitive examinations, to the schools of highest rank. The Spanish government granted the title of Superior Normal School for Men Teachers in 1895.⁴¹ All in all, the early "nineties" was a progressive era in the short history of the Normal School, under the leadership of its director, Fr. Hermenigildo Jacas, S.J.

IN WARTIME

In September 1896, the civil government informed the Normal School that the military authorities expected the arrival of 8,000 Spanish troops and, because barracks were not yet sufficiently prepared, they wished the use of the Normal School for that purpose. The Normal School was offered the use of the pavilion on the grounds of the Regional Exposition which adjoined those of the Normal School, the site of the present Philippine General Hospital. In order to make room for 1,000 of these troops, some of the normalistas and their teachers were transferred to the Jesuit villa house in Santa Ana and the rest remained in the school and tried to carry on their normal activities.⁴² But the situation was difficult for both groups: for those in Santa Ana because the battles between the Philippine revolutionaries and the Spanish troops were drawing closer, and for the students in Ermita, because of interference from the noisy, rowdy Spanish troops. But within a year, barracks were completed elsewhere, the troops were withdrawn and the Normal School resumed its quiet life.⁴³ In 1898,

41. Copiador, 2:459-72; Pastells, *Misión*, 3:39; Alzona, *History of Education*, pp. 281-85.

42. APP, EN, Civil Administration to Director, 21 September 1896; Ayuntamiento to Director, 25 September 1896; Repetti, *Philippine Mission*, pp. 136-38.

43. Repetti, *Philippine Mission*, pp. 137-38.

the Normal School was again used as barracks for a battalion of Spanish marines and classes were suspended throughout the brief Spanish-American War. They were resumed on 1 October 1898.⁴⁴

During the Philippine Revolution and the Spanish-American War, the Normal School was in the midst of the fighting and harbored hundreds of refugees. It remained unharmed. This immunity was not due to the prestige of the Normal School itself but to the Manila Observatory which occupied the same premises. The Observatory was highly respected by all combatants, Filipino, Spanish and American.

When the Normal School resumed in 1898, there were changes because the country was now under American rule. English was introduced into the curriculum and equal time with Spanish was devoted to it. United States history took the place of the history of Spain. Graduates of the ordinary three-year course did not need a rating of "excellent" in order to be admitted to the Superior course but only the rating of "approved."⁴⁵ The American government, however, acting through the Philippine Commission, continued to subsidize it as had the Spanish government. It paid the salaries of the professors, paid the rent and supplied school equipment.⁴⁶

CHANGE TO PRIVATE SCHOOL

On 21 January 1901, the Philippine Commission decreed the establishment of the Department of Public Instruction, by which a new system of public schools was constituted. A few weeks later, the Normal School was informed that all public funds would be withdrawn from it at the end of the current school-year and that it no longer would be a part of the public school system. It could be merely a private school.⁴⁷ And so, on 31 March 1901 the Escuela Normal ceased to be the public institution for the formation of primary school teachers. The Philippine Commission, at least publicly, gave no reasons for this action. But the reasons were obvious. Since the Escuela Normal was devoted to the propagation

44. Pastells, *Misión*, 3:289, 334; Repetti, *Philippine Mission*, p. 138.

45. APP, EN, 1900 Prospectus of the Normal School.

46. Repetti, *Philippine Mission*, p. 140.

47. APP, EN, letter of David P. Barrow, City Superintendent of Schools, 20 March 1901, endorsed by Major General MacArthur, Military Governor, 30 March 1901.

of the Catholic Religion throughout the archipelago, it could have no part in the public school system established by the Americans. Moreover since one of its main objectives was the diffusion of the Spanish language, it was not a fit instrument for the introduction of English as the common language of the Filipinos, which was a main objective of the new public school system. The intention of the Philippine Commission was clear from the fact that, while it withdrew public support from the Escuela Normal on 31 March 1901, it inaugurated a new Normal School on 1 September of the same year. The new Normal School, called the Philippine Normal School and known today as the Philippine Normal College, was opened in the Escuela Municipal, which today is the site of the Araullo High School on Taft Avenue. It was later transferred for a while to the Regional Exposition Grounds and then, in 1910, it was moved to its present site at the corner of Taft Avenue and Ayala Boulevard.⁴⁸ The only relationship between the two normal schools is that indicated by the proximity of the withdrawal of public funds from the one and the opening of the other.

During the thirty-six years as the public normal school for men, the Escuela Normal had conferred the title of "Maestro" on 1,693 graduates, and that of "Assistant Teacher" on 340.⁴⁹ A Filipina historian of education gave it this tribute:

The establishment of the normal school during the Spanish regime made teaching the noble profession that it is considered today in the Philippines. The graduates of the school, wherever they served, were highly respected and honored citizens. The countless contemporary articles portraying the miserable life of public-school teachers were not meant to cast discredit upon the teachers themselves, but rather to call attention to the inadequacy of their compensation and material equipment. The salutary influence which was exerted by these teachers was recognized and felt by their contemporaries.⁵⁰

This tribute was published in 1932.

FINAL YEARS

Without the government subsidy, the Escuela Normal managed to continue as a private school for a few years, though with great

48. Bulletin of Information of the Philippine Normal College, AY 1976-77.

49. Repetti, *Philippine Mission*, p. 141.

50. Alzona, *History of Education*, pp. 77-78.

difficulty. The director, Fr. Pedro Torra, S.J., strove mightily to obtain the support of the bishops and parish priests of the Philippines. He urged them to send students to the Normal School in order that Catholic education might continue to influence the spiritual and moral life of the Philippines, despite the competition from the emerging new public school system.⁵¹ A special difficulty was the uncertainty that the graduates of the Escuela Normal would obtain a place in the public schools. The lack of available places in the public schools was greatly augmented by the importation of 1,000 American public school teachers, the majority of whom arrived in 1901 on the army transport SS. Thomas, and hence are known today as the "Thomasites."⁵²

The school renamed itself "Escuela Normal de Maestros de San Francisco de Javier."⁵³ From its beginning in 1865, St. Francis Xavier had been the patron of the Escuela Normal but until now the name of the saint had not been used in the title.⁵⁴

To attract more students, a course in Commerce was introduced in 1903, but further proliferation of courses was inhibited for fear of competing with the other Jesuit school in Manila, the Ateneo in Intramuros.⁵⁵

The temper of the times, the early American period in the Philippines, is illustrated by a few incidents. In 1900, American troops were quartered in the Regional Exposition Grounds (the site of the present PGH) separated by a wall from the grounds of the Normal School. Fr. Torra, the Director of the Normal School, wrote to Major General Otis complaining that the American soldiers had broken down the wall in several places, had sneaked into the Normal School garden and stolen fruit. General Otis, in the military manner, endorsed Fr. Torra's letter to six subordinate officers and, having received their reports, wrote to Fr. Torra admitting the damage, though minimizing it, and assuring him that measures had been taken to prevent any recurrences.⁵⁶ A few years later, a

51. APP, EN, letter of Fr. Torra, 19 March 1901.

52. Glenn Anthony May, *Social Engineering in the Philippines* (London: Greenwood Press, 1980), p. 85.

53. APP, EN, letter of Director to Brigadier General Davis, 18 March 1901.

54. Pastells, *Misión*, 1:60.

55. Miguel Saderra Masó, S.J., *Philippine Jesuits*, trans. and annotated by Leo A. Cul-lum, S.J. (Manila, 1974) p. 107, n. 403d.

56. APP, EN, Correspondence of Fr. Torra with Major General Otis, April 12, to April 30, 1900.

group of American parents wrote to the Director expressing their regrets over the "unpleasantness" that had occurred between their sons, with other American boys, and the normalistas and assuring him that, in so far as it lay within their power, it would not happen again. An indication of the cause of the "unpleasantness" is in the suggestion of the parents "that if the boys of your school, when marching upon the sidewalks which are narrow, would proceed in single file, it would tend to avoid friction and promote quiet."⁵⁷ In 1904, the Normal School was informed by the Municipal Board that it, together with other schools named such as the Ateneo, Letran, the University of Santo Tomas, would no longer have free city water, as they had during the Spanish regime, but would have to pay for it; water meters would be installed.⁵⁸

In 1902, Msgr. Guidi, the newly appointed Apostolic Delegate to the Philippines, requested the Jesuits, in the name of His Holiness, to conduct an archdiocesan seminary of Manila, a request soon confirmed by the new Archbishop of Manila, Msgr. Harty.⁵⁹ This marked the beginning of the end of the Normal School. The Jesuits accepted the invitation, and in June 1903, began to accept seminarians into the Normal School.⁶⁰ Thus was begun what came to be known as the Seminario de San Javier. For more than a year, there was much discussion of the future of the Normal School. The Pope and Cardinal Gasparri, the head of the Sacred Congregation, did not want the Normal School to be closed. They seemed to be under the impression that the Normal School still had the favored role of being the normal school for the education of primary school teachers throughout the Philippines. But when the new situation was explained to them they withdrew their opinion.⁶¹ Finally, it was decided by all concerned that the Normal School would be closed at the end of the school-year 1904-1905. The last graduation from the Normal School was in March 1905.⁶² The Jesuit institutions on Padre Faura were now only the Seminario de San Javier and the Manila Observatory.

57. APP, EN, Parents to Director, 26 January 1904.

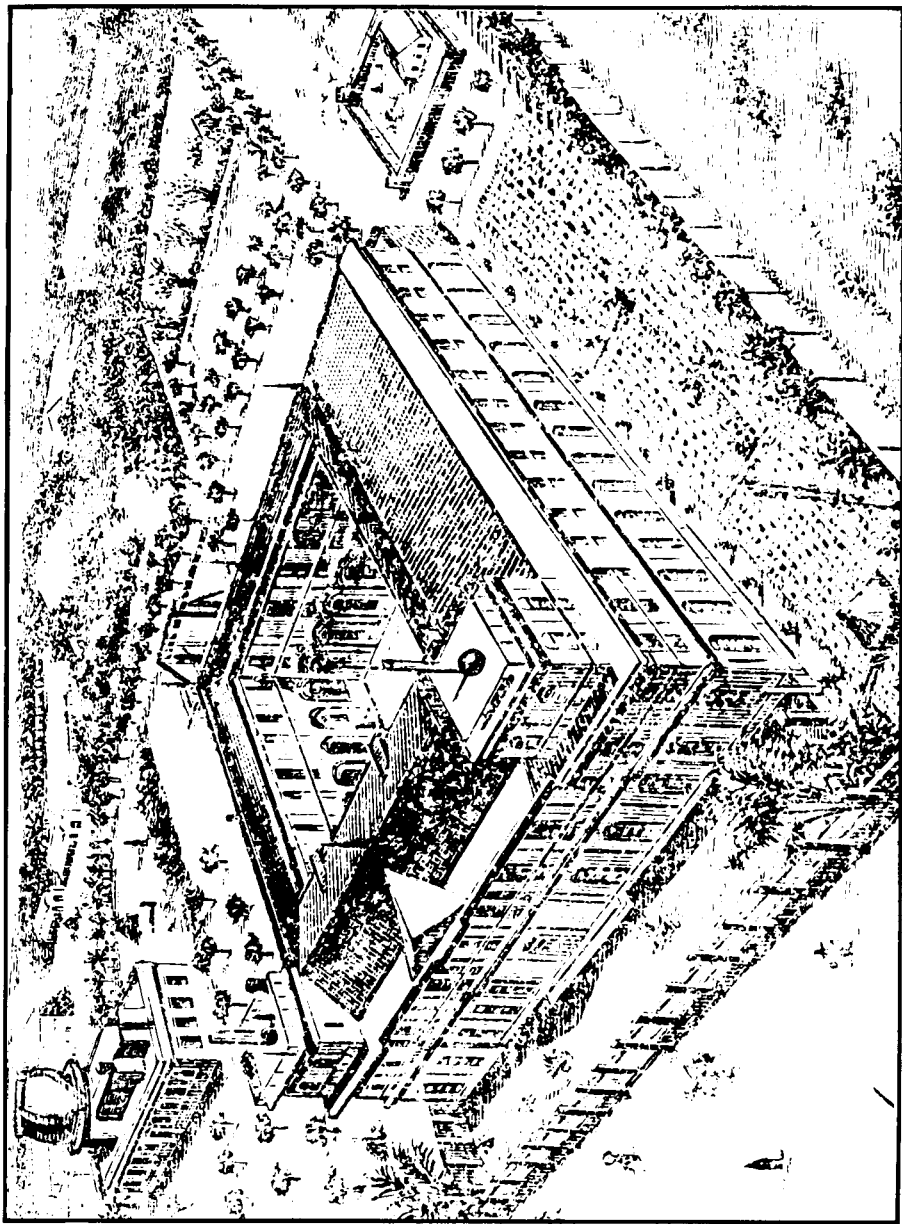
58. APP, EN, Extract from Minutes of Municipal Board, 27 June 1904.

59. Repetti, *Philippine Mission*, p. 144.

60. Ibid.

61. APP, Meeting of Mission Consultors, 15 August 1904.

62. Repetti, *Philippine Mission*, p. 148; APP Meeting of Mission Consultors, 8 January 1905.



Escuela Normal, Padre Faura Street, 1886-1905; smaller building on left is Manila Observatory