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Filipino Publications in The Pacific Northwest

By Victorio Acosta Velasco
Editor & Publisher, Filipino Forum

Unmistakably inspired by patriotic sentiments and the desire to foster community oneness, a handful of enthusiastic Filipino students at the University of Washington in the fall of 1924 issued what is considered the first Filipino publication in the Pacific Northwest. It was called "The Philippine Seattle Colonist." Mimeographed in four pages, it was issued twice a month and in its mast head it was announced as the "sole organ of the Filipinos in the Pacific Northwest."

The Colonist's Creed

Explaining partly the reason for its establishment, the Colonist states in its published creed: "Let nobody belittle the interests, the happiness, and the liberties of the Filipino people. The Philippines is only an insignificant part of this vast world, a country many times smaller than many others. Yet to Filipinos it means just as much as, if not more than, any other country however big it is to its people."

First Editor

The Colonist was first edited and published by Manuel S. Rustia, at that time commercial attache of the Philippine Government in Seattle and at the same time graduate student at the University of Washington. He was later assisted by Lorenzo L. Zamora, Victorio Acosta Velasco, and Sebastian Abella as editors. When Rustia was transferred to New York, the Colonist was edited by Victorio Acosta

Velasco with Victorio C. Edades as business manager.

First Number

The first issue of the Colonist came out on November 1, 1924. The Filipino community of Seattle and vicinity enthusiastically received the paper that it ran out of copies of the first issue, although it was sold for five cents a copy. It was also noticed by the editor of the Philippine Republic, a monthly pro-Philippine independence magazine in Washington, D. C., which published a reproduction of the front page of the Colonist's first issue, and termed it "the breezy little publication of the Filipino residents of Seattle."

The Philippine Digest

Stopping publication in the summer of 1927, it was immediately succeeded by the Philippine Digest, edited and published by Lorenzo L. Zamora. It followed similar format, and inherited the advertisers of the Colonist. Editor Zamora also mimeographed his paper and for just one issue printed it when a rival Filipino publication came into the field. The Digest existed from 1927 to 1929.

Philippine-American Review

In January, 1928 Roman A. Trias published the Philippine-American Review, with Victorio Acosta Velasco as editor and Alejandro Abadilla as business manager. The publication came out in only three issues, printed in fine quality paper. It was the first regularly printed Filipino publication in the Pacific Northwest.

(To be continued in the January, 1953 issue of the Filipino Forum).

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