ON THE PALMS WHICH ARE CALLED COCOS AND THEIR GREAT USEFULNESS[1]

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We can say very rightly that the coco palm is supreme among all trees, for it seems that nature and its Creator have been more especially generous with it than with the others. Almost everything is obtainable from it, and a single tree would provide all human needs, as I shall presently relate.

The coco palm overtops other trees, surpasses them in beauty, and leaves them far behind in many respects. It resembles the date palm in appearance and in size, in verdure and beauty, and in elegance of carriage and form. They differ only in the fruits, for while the date palm produces the dates which are of the size and appearance so striking to those who have seen them (they abound in Spain and much more so in the kingdom of Valencia), the coco palm produces what the Spaniards call "cocos," because the fruit, shell and meat (in which form coconut reaches Spain), has what looks like a mouth in the middle where the stem is joined and two nostril-like depressions, which because of the appearance of a frown produced, looks as if it were making grimaces (*haciendo cocos*)....

The coco palm comes to bearing much earlier than the date. In some regions it begins to set fruit five years after planting, and in others in six and at most in seven years. I have planted several thousands of these palms during my more than thirty years of residence in the Philippines; hence, I am speaking from experience in this and other points I am treating. I do not know that, as certain people claim, a male palm is necessary in order that the female may bear fruit. Even among the Filipinos[2] (as I have already recorded) there is a current belief that there are male and female palms which they recognize from the leaves. Coconuts which are planted, as is the regular practice, in large numbers and over extensive contiguous areas all produce fruit; I am unaware of such sexual distinction (as I have read from certain authors). Every month, with the new moon,

[1]From an unpublished manuscript written in 1668 and entitled *Historia natural del sitio, fertilidad y calidad de las islas é indios*. Translated by Leopoldo B. Uichanco from a transcription of the original in Spanish which was kindly furnished by Rev. Miguel Selga, S.J., Director of the Weather Bureau. For a biographical sketch on Father Alzina, *see* THE PHILIPPINE AGRICULTURIST, Vol. XX, No. 6, (November) 1931.

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[2]The author consistently uses the word *indios* throughout the text. In translation, the terms Filipinos or natives have been substituted.

a flower stalk appears, which bursts open after twenty days or more, and uncovers the flowers. Hitherto they are inclosed in a thick hard membrane (about an arm's length and also about the thickness of an arm), and with them are some white fibers, as in the case of the dates. The inflorescence continues to open and assume the form of a plume, studded throughout with little white flowers of the size of yellow violets and equally as faintly scented. A part of their number drops, because otherwise the resulting coconuts, if they should all develop, would be too many to be nourished and brought to ripeness by the trunk.

The nuts that remain continue to develop, arranged like a tuft of feathers, until they reach the size of a round white peach. A number of the stalks proceeds to dry up until not more than ten to twelve remain, and these, together with one or two and sometimes three little nuts, continue to grow and become green until with their weight the axis which has hitherto been erect bends down and the spikes hang from it. These clusters, which the Filipinos term "rang," are now pressed against the trunk and below the bases of the petioles. Other panicles subsequently appear and behave in the same manner. In that way each palm produces twelve racemes a year, one a month, each of which has as many as ten, others up to fifteen, while a few even twenty, nuts which are very heavy. A whole year elapses from the time the panicle begins to appear and split open until the nuts are mature with the skin dry and brown. It is wonderful and pleasing to see some trees so loaded and full of nuts; one is inclined to extol the glory of God. I shall relate my experience in a town named Borongan, where near the parish house and church there were many coconut trees (and such is a common case in almost all towns). Every month I ordered all the mature nuts picked. Once I inspected a tree which looked to me to have many nuts left. I asked if that tree had already been harvested and I was answered in the affirmative and that more than thirty nuts had been brought down from it. Nevertheless, the tree still appeared so heavily loaded. I ordered some one to climb up and count the nuts that remained, so big were they and of the size they normally reached at maturity. In that one tree there were counted two hundred full-sized nuts, without taking into account the small and immature ones which were locally known as "alhoror." As young nuts, they may be peeled and cooked like the artichokes of Spain, while a certain kind may be eaten raw.

Every nut of the size we described has a loose and rather soft husk, called "bonot" (we shall deal later on with its uses); a second kind has harder covering, called "bogol" ["bagol", probably misspelled.—Tr.] which at maturity becomes black or brownish black. Within this husk is the nut proper, or shell (which in Spain is known as "coco"). When the coconut is still green, although full-sized, and this is ordinarily big and is termed "silot" locally, it contains water which is

as clear as rainwater and not too sweet, so that each green nut is a water jug. It is a very cooling drink when the nut is picked before being warmed by the sun. It is very agreeable and salutary for sufferers from uraemia, although it is said to be bad for the lungs. Some nuts contain good quantities of water, others less and certain very big ones more. This coconut water comes in very handy especially in places where the water supply is not very good. I once knew a priest, who for months and even for years, had drunk nothing else and appeared to fare well (although in the beginning his stomach was somewhat upset until he got used to the water). When the water content is in the right condition, the meat of the nut is tender and relishing (I find nothing comparable to it, except certain custards which are ordinarily made from cow's milk). Upon splitting the green nut open and scooping the meat out with a thin piece of the outer husk in the same manner as with a spoon, it is a delicacy. With a regular spoon, it would not taste so good; neither would the coconut water if drunk out of a tumbler. It appears that nature has provided its own appropriate drinking cup; for, as the saying goes, wine in glass, water in earthen jug, and milk in jar, so the coconut water is drunk better and is more delicious out of its natural container, according to our daily experience.

As the coconut hardens, its meat becomes more and, thicker and, because it solidifies so much, it grows to the hard texture of an almond, although it remains firmly attached to the shell to about the thickness of a finger. When this meat is eaten out of one's hand, as some like it, it tastes like almond or chestnut, and more so if half roasted. When the meat is grated and pressed, a white, thick milk is obtained which resembles cow's milk or that of other animals and which is used here like almond milk. It is called "natuc" locally and the best luxury that the Filipinos can enjoy is a mixture of their food with this, as is largely their practice, whereby the taste is improved. The Spaniards use the milk in various dishes, particularly with rice, and the result is not inferior to those prepared with goat's or sheep's milk in Spain. Coconut milk is also used as a substitute for cow's milk in egg dishes. Grated or sliced coconut meat fattens hogs; and it has been found that with two hundred nuts freely accessible to the animals, the hogs get so fat that later on one hog would hardly eat half a nut a day. They eat the meat and on account of its oily nature they have to supplement the ration with leaves and with other fruits. From the grated meat, after sun-drying, coconut oil is made with no other effort than merely to leave it in the sun and afterwards press it. With the particular kind of press in use here, the oil comes out clear and golden, but unsuitable for food on account of the impurities which it ordinarily contains. Cooking oil is prepared by expressing the milk mentioned above, and if necessary adding a little ordinary water or coconut water itself, and then cooking in pans (of the usual kind but round like a ball beneath; these are made in China

or locally from cast iron or steel; the Filipinos call these "carahay"). Oil prepared in this manner is clearer than that from sun-dried meat, as delicious as fresh oil from Spain and very acceptable for cooking anything that the latter is used for, like frying fish (although in the Philippines lard is more commonly preferred); and it has been our experience (as in the case of coconut water) that food cooked with this fresh oil is good and salutary for asthma sufferers, relief from which ailment is ordinarily obtained from its use, while copious drinking of coconut water aggravates the disease (such is the difference between parts of the same material, for the water, after the meat hardens, possesses an opposite quality to the latter; the effect of heat on the meat especially must be the principal cause of the contrast). Large quantities of oil, either cooked or raw, are prepared and used in the whole Islands, for lamps in churches and in houses, for illumination and other uses, and for various preparations.

When the ripe nut is not picked, it falls, because it becomes detached from the stem on account of lack of sufficient sap and because of the great weight (although the ripe nuts are much lighter than the green). In the ripe nut, the water contained is no longer fit for drinking (it is scanty and oily). From the eye, where it was attached to the stem, a shoot appears which grows into a palm, at first with the leaf entire and not divided, as in older palms. The fronds do not become divided until six or seven are formed. Roots are also extruded between the hard shell and the soft husk. Some way or other they nourish themselves (although hung aloft) for many days while the water condenses into an apple which grows within the nut and eventually fills the entire cavity of the shell at the expense of the meat. If the shoot be not removed before it is spent or planted or made into oil, the nut would be useless.

The white and spongy apple, which is agreeable and sweet in taste, is called "buay" or "boa". It is eaten with relish and not infrequently there is found within it (I have seen several) a white stone, more or less like a piece of crystal, of the size of an olive, some round, others elongate, and several pearl-colored, although not so fine. This stone is called "sangur" or "mutia," which is the common term for any precious stone. Certain virtues are ascribed to it; I have never verified such claims, although I have many of these stones in my possession; I do not relate them as they are just stories, but not so is the finding of the stones.

So much for the nut; let us now return to the things that may be obtained from the panicle ("fillola" in Valencia), which is the envelope and storehouse of the fruit. From it is obtained what the Filipinos and also resident Spaniards call "tuba" [toddy], which from my own standpoint, is one of the best products of that plant. The following is the manner of obtaining it: When the panicle is developed, with a length of two spans, more or less, and the thickness of an arm, before it opens or unfolds (they bind it securely if

necessary), it is made to grow doubled up through great cramping. The effect is produced by tying it with one or two palm leaves to the trunk, axis, or petiole of the same palm. The process is called "buyog" which means to make yield and double up. After reaching that position (which is half arched), the Filipino begins to cut the panicle by means of a knife which is short and bent in the form of a sickle (although narrow toward the point), repeatedly renewing the cut little by little three times a day and once more at sunset. In four or five days the sap begins to flow, at first somewhat dense and turbid, but after six or seven days fluid and clear and of the color of light blue water. A bamboo tube (which is large, as we shall see) is fastened so as to receive the sap. When the plant is healthy and full of sap, and not all trees are equally so (the Filipinos can tell by the drooping leaves), about half an *azumbre*[3] may be obtained in a day from each tree, so long as the cut is renewed as described, until the entire inflorescence is used up; hence, what should have become fruits is converted into toddy. In this manner, all the substance that should go into the formation of the nuts is turned into this beverage. Other inflorescences appear, which may be used for the same purpose; so that toddy may be obtained all the year round and in all months (and not at certain seasons only, as was reported by a certain author).

Toddy is not only a delightful and salutary beverage, as has been our daily experience and as everybody knows, but also a very good medicine. It refreshes the blood, relieves inflammation of the liver, removes obstruction of the lungs, and softens a distended belly. In fact, it may be said to be a cure-all, for many who had not found any remedy for their persistent ailments secured relief from drinking toddy. When cooked to a thicker consistency, a very good and very sweet honey is made with which to prepare preserves. If left without further ado, it produces the best and strongest vinegar found here. When distilled in an alembic, as in making Spanish rum, superior wine, which is better than others used in the Islands, results (and the Spaniards and others drink it with more relish than they should) and the Filipinos, by adding certain barks of trees, without distilling, render it into a very strong wine which intoxicates them very well or very badly; because any wine or something similar affects them so.

Hence, we have in the coconut palm very clear and very good water, milk, oil, toddy (which is as good and better than mead), vinegar, and honey, all liquid; to say nothing of almonds or chestnuts, cream, artichokes and the like, apples, and precious stones. Moreover, there are the trunks, which after becoming old and no longer serviceable to the tree, may be used in building houses, the trunk furnishing all the lumber, from the posts to the other parts. From the leaves, the so called "paver" is made by doubling the pinnae lengthwise over a piece of bamboo stick and sewing them up

[3] *Azumbre*, a unit of measure equivalent to two liters.

crosswise together. This serves as shingles for the roof. Also, from the leaves are woven mats, or "petates" (as these are called here), which serve as beds; and with the exception of rattan for tying, everything may be obtained from the palm. The husk, because it is fibrous, may be made into rope; it may be used as a fuse for arquebuses, as well as for other purposes. It may be utilized for calking ships more satisfactorily than oakum from Spain, because it lasts longer and stops sea water. In the Indies a tow-rope, called "cairo," is made in large cables for the ships; these cables last longer than those from hemp or other fibers even if the latter be tarred. The hard shells are used as pots (I have often seen Filipinos cooking in them in the absence of other utensils, and if care is taken not to allow the water to boil dry, they may be used several times). They serve as dishes, called "paya," bowl and cup, called "ongot" [probably, "hoñgot. "Tr.] and mug, called "tecumates," for drinking chocolate. The trunk, as well as the petioles, and dry fruits serve as firewood (and the fire produced with it is hotter and more effective than with other fuels), and finally from the ashes, which are no longer useful for other things, lye may be made, which can be converted, by the addition of a little lime, into a very fine white and hard soap which cleanses well. For these reasons we may correctly consider (without taking into account what I shall add in the next chapter) that the coconut palm combines in it the usefulness of many trees.

ON THE AGE AND OTHER CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS PALM AND ITS VARIETIES

We shall now discuss matters in connection with other characteristics of the palm itself, inasmuch as we have already spoken at length of its fruit. We have stated that in five years the tree ordinarily comes to bearing in very favorable localities, in less suitable ones longer, but without waiting for the number of years necessary for the date palm in Spain, although the longevity of the latter is reckoned at something like two hundred years or longer. We cannot say for certain how many years the coconut lives (because the Filipinos have had and still do have very little curiosity in this regard and before our [the Spaniards'] arrival, they had not known how to reckon years and months, except that by the moon and from crop to crop they counted one year). We have seen that there are palms of which the trunks are very tall and are called "layog." Nobody remembers who planted them, although they remember the hands through which they have passed on to their present owners. These trees are so old that they have become sterile or the fruits are very small, and there can be no doubt that they must be over one hundred years old. I have learned from a certain author that in Malabar, where there are plenty of these palms, they live for three or four hundred years, so that they equal or surpass the date palm in longevity. Those that we have seen were planted by the early fathers when they founded the towns and churches and implanted Christianity (now over sixty years ago); their altars, we observed, fall far short of the ancient. Planted while

young, some of the trees have come to reach a height of forty yards and sometimes more and, even at that, the Filipinos climb them as if they were climbing a stairway, because they cut notches in the trunk, in the manner of steps, which they call "lublub." [Author probably meant "laniog." Tr.] The notches are two spans distant, one series on one side and another on the other side (so as to gain successive footholds), and are two or three fingers deep, allowing space to rest the inside of the foot. The men go up and down these notches, at times carrying with them the large bamboo tubes filled with toddy and at other times bunches of fruits, with a fearlessness which taxes the admiration and almost produces a swoon among the onlookers—a sufficient test of their bravery, for they go up and down with perfect nonchalance.

I have heard some people question in the style of philosophers where the vital part is located in this palm, so long is its life. The reason for their doubts is that apparently it is not in the roots. Although many and very long, for they are found at distances of more than twenty *brazas*[4] from the trunk (the roots lengthen in proportion to the height of the trunk) and are no thicker than the little finger at their source, they progressively attenuate, although not much, and do not go deeper than about four spans (a common habit of all the trees here). We have seen many roots cut and the soil dug in other cases, without injury to the palm. The vital part is apparently not in the trunk either, for we have seen a gaping hole through it into which a closed fist would fit, without affecting the leaves, fruits, and petioles. Neither is it in the fronds, for although totally defoliated or scorched through some cause, new ones appear. The seat of life must be in the heart, which is situated in the middle; this produces the petioles or pinnae. It is a daily observation here that upon removing that part, which is done to use it for food (this is the last use made from the fresh palm), the plant dies without fail. The heart is very delicious and is cut out for food, mixed with oil and vinegar or with honey; it is incomparably better than the "palmitos" which are eaten in Spain. But boiled or stewed, it is much better and more healthful. It is prepared as pickles, or *chara*, as they call it here, which is by salting and adding vinegar; it lasts for many days and is very inviting. So that this palm is always valuable and sustaining. This palm is badly attacked by a species of beetles which is present here and which the Filipinos call "bagang" [*Oryctes rhinoceros* Linn.—Tr.]. Some of them are as big as a fist, although somewhat longer, and are of such fine blackness that they surpass the most highly burnished jet. Their skin or shell is so solid that it contains neither flesh nor blood inside and is hard like rock. Even after death, the skin lasts for months and even years without disintegrating. These beetles kill many palms because in order to reach the inner tissues on which they feed they perforate the entire tree and from the point of feeding the

[4] *Braza*, a measure of length equivalent to about six feet.

upper part of the frond dies irremediably. Even if all the fronds are eaten (as frequently happens), the part of the trunk that escapes sends out new shoots, but this time frequently below the heart owing to the upper part being obstructed by the drying of the petioles. Although in time the palm recovers, the trunk remains with a hump at the injured part, which remains permanently. It is in this place that life begins anew; hence, a proof that the heart is the seat of life.

And now that we deal with palms, we shall add other benefits derived from this palm. Between the bases of petioles (as have also the palms of Spain, although in this case they are mere trash or dolls beside giants compared with the coconuts) there is a fabric which the Filipinos call "gonot." At times it reaches a length of four spans and a width of two. It looks like a piece of Spanish burlap or sackcloth and is not less strong, probably stronger. The Filipinos use it for making bags or pockets for holding many things. Two of these serve as saddle bags for carrying food when they travel. When the rain is not heavy or too continuous, water does not drip through and wet the contents. Articles made of this material are also used as receptacles for holding clean hulled rice. Several times I have seen "gonot" used as sails of good size, for which it furnishes adequate sizes to make up the length and breadth. It is very durable and much less expensive than cloth. For all these things and more than has been said the palm is useful.

I now come to varieties of this palm that produce coconuts. Although they are all the same in the form of trunk and leaves, the latter part differs in color. Some leaves are uniformly green in the petioles, as well as in the pinnae; while in others the petioles are red and the pinnae lighter green. Still others have yellowish petioles, which are not so red as are some nor so green as are others, but midway between. The pinnae in all cases have each a small rib in the middle which is like a nerve or a vein and is very firm and tenacious. Many of them from the entire lengths of the pinnae, which are of three spans, are bundled together for use as a broom. This is the kind most commonly used in the homes of Filipinos and even of Spaniards (another use that we may add for this palm). The fruits take the color of the leaves and even the name. The red ones are called "linbahun," [probably, "lumba-um"—Tr.] which means red colored; the green "malunhao," and the lighter ones "ogis." There is also a great diversity in size, although the most common is that which we have already noted. There are very big ones which would measure more than one *azumbre*. I have heard it said (I have never seen nor measured it) that in the island of Bohol there are coconuts which measure two *azumbres*. Thus, they must be like pumpkins or large wine containers. There are others, "pilipog," which are smaller and of commonplace usage. This last kind of nuts is used for making dippers, called "tabo," for drawing water or other fluids from jars or other larger

receptacles. From the smaller nuts are made "tecumates" for drinking chocolate, which are finished in a very curious and elegant fashion and which certain Spaniards embellish with silver and even with gold, each artisan adding his peculiar design. These articles are much esteemed and valued. Of the bigger nuts, bowls are made which are ornamented with gold or silver filigree, which objects, in addition to being curiosities, are believed to impart medicinal qualities to the drinking water. Persons who are afflicted with stones in the bladder are ordinarily given as a remedy drink from coconut-shell bowls.

Not only is the difference manifest in the leaves and fruits, but also in taste and in quality. There are palms which are called "cayumamis," and their fruit while tender has a sweet husk, so that it is eaten like an artichoke which it resembles much in flavor; but its water is tasteless because all the sweetness goes to the husk. However, after it grows harder, it is just like other varieties. There are also those nuts which are called "lopisan"; they have very scanty and thin husks and the meat is abundant and very thick and in this way they yield more oil than other varieties. On the other hand, other kinds are all husk, for this layer is very thick and spongy and the meat very thin. This variety is called "bontanun," and there is a saying in connection with this. When a person talks much and does little, he is called "buntanuncundao lubi"; pay no attention to that man, who is like the coconut of much husk and little meat, all words and no deeds. There are also differences in the shells; some are very thin and useless for making saucers or cups, and to these are applied the term "carahun" or "saloquihan". Certain shells are always white, others spotted with white and black, and still others very black throughout. There are also differences in the height and thickness of the trunks and of the fronds, for those that, as we said, are called "pagara" are thin and short compared with others, and those called "pilipog" are much more so, thus seeming that because of their delicate nature, their fruits would be likewise.

As to time of bearing, although, as we have stated, the coconut palm commonly begins to fruit in five or six years, there is a variety which is ready and which does produce in the third year, not because it is a dwarf (as one author claims), but because its fruiting begins early while it is small; subsequently, however, it continues to grow like the other varieties. I saw in the island of Bohol (among many other novelties) a tree of that variety which fruits very early; they call it "dailig." It was necessary to dig a deep hole in the soil in order to maintain the fruits in their natural condition. In picking the fruits one had to go into the hole and bend his body; likewise, in the collection of toddy the bamboo tubes were located below the surface of the soil and in this case it was necessary to widen the holes so that the sand would not get into the fluid. Incidentally, it should be noted that coconuts are more productive on soils which are sandy and near the sea than

on harder ground in the interior. Hence, there are several islets in which these palms are most prolific and in which coconuts have grown so thick over entire land areas that all other vegetation was killed. There is such a place near Guiuan, which is called Soloan (and, according to some, this was the first Philippine soil on which Magellan set foot when he discovered the Philippines and when he first sailed through the strait that now bears his name). Soloan is so fertile and the palms there so plentiful that their trunks grow almost side by side, like fingers on a hand, although they are more widely dispersed overhead. The nuts either sprout on the palms themselves or fall to the ground and develop their shoots and roots. Thus, if certain parts of that island (in which the variety "palavan," which we spoke of above, is grown) had not been swampy, the entire place would have been covered with coconuts. Some trees so overtop the others that the nuts fall into the latter as they become detached from the trunk upon reaching maturity. One cannot easily reach that island, because it is in the middle of the mouth of a channel which passes between the islands of Ibabao and Mindanao. The current is so swift that one can cross only at certain times of the year by making "tuig," as they call it (that is, by waiting for just the right time to go there and likewise for the return trip); otherwise, one may be carried away by the current (as happens sometimes) to where he does not plan to go. The inhabitants of Guiuan prepare large quantities of oil from sun-dried coconut meat (as it is at the dry season when one can go there), sun-dried coconuts being richest in oil.

Finally, the Visayans have many names for distinguishing the ages of coconuts (I mean the fruits; the distinctive names for the plant are fewer). The newly protruding panicle is called "daot," or "tayog," which, as has been stated, takes a whole year to develop into mature nuts which are dry and are called "uga", or "lagasna." To these nuts are also applied seventeen distinct names, according to size or age. From the kind called "alhoror," which is when they may be eaten like raw artichokes until they grow dry enough to harvest they may always be used for food and various titbits may be prepared from them. Coconut oil possesses high medicinal qualities. When fresh, it is a very efficacious purgative, although one needs to have an especially good stomach to take it; and old, it is used to allay inflammations and for preparation of various ointments. It has another good property, and that is, no case is known where ill effects followed its application, as frequently happens with the use of Castille oil or of that from drug stores. For this reason, it may be said of this oil that from its effectiveness against certain pains and inflammations it has as much medicinal value as the toddy which we have discussed above.

And in conclusion, in order to leave nothing to be said about the coconut, I might add that by slightly enlarging the largest eye in the shell (which in the natural state hardly admits the little finger), it serves as a trap for

monkeys (which are very keen-witted and seem like rational beings or at least they must possess a vestige of reason). The way is (for the curious) to set one, two, or more of these especially prepared nuts containing a certain amount of their own meat, which is much relished by the monkeys (they even steal the toddy from the collecting tubes), as well as coconut water, when they can, and this may be done when the fruit is still green. The monkeys insert their hands through the holes, which they can easily do, to get at the little loose pieces of coconut meat. After preliminary trials, they bring out the meat piece by piece and eat it. They soon gain enough confidence and upon inserting the hands again, reach down so deep that they are unable to withdraw them from the tight-fitting opening. Not wishing to let go of the booty, they remain prisoners, so that although they wanted to flee, they could not do so owing to the weight of the coconuts. They are held by the load and are captured and killed, for not wishing to abandon what they once started to do.

The coconut is not a bait for monkeys only but also for men who often steal the nuts. And may what happened to me once serve as a warning! In the town of Tacloban (capital of the province of Leyte, where the *alcalde mayor* ordinarily lives) we had a number of palms from which we could hardly obtain nuts, because the natives of the town, as well as strangers, and worse perhaps the domestics of Spaniards (who always have bad habits here) would not leave us a single fruit. I was a recent arrival in that town and I told them in the church one Sunday that it was wicked to steal the coconuts, and more so, because they belonged to the church and therefore were like sacred things; and that if they needed any nut, they should come to me and I would give them some, but to make this possible it would be necessary that they do not steal them all. There was, however, very little change, until God finally used an effective means. One evening a native came to steal coconuts. He climbed a palm which was six or seven *estados*[5] in height. It was not one of the oldest, having been planted by the *padres*. He grasped a frond or branch in each hand in order to mount the tree and pick nuts. But his precaution was of no avail. Both petioles tore off from the trunk (a rare happening when the petioles are green, and never seen hitherto) and fell along with him to the ground where he died without being able to say even an "ay". (There was a house nearby occupied by the caretaker of the coconuts and the people there heard the impact unaccompanied by any other sound.) He was found in the morning with the two petioles in the grip of both hands and these were released only by the use of force. Hence, it seems as if the palms of the hands fused with the palms of the tree. They notified me. I was sorry for the mishap and we buried the dead. But every one regarded it as a punishment from God and thereafter, in twelve and a half years that I stayed in that town, nobody

[5] *Estado*, a measure of length equivalent to 1.85 yards.

dared to approach the coconuts, so frightened were they at that event. As a proof of its efficacy, the *alcalde mayor* once related to me that many months after the tragedy, he offered a native one *toston*[6] to fetch some green nuts but he refused saying that he would not climb those palms for ten pesos because God was watching over those palms of the *padre* and that he did not wish to get killed like the other fellow. So much for coconut palms; let us take up other subjects.

[6]Portuguese silver coin.

ESSAY ON THE BANANA

(*A Japanese schoqlboy on the "honorable" banana*)

The banana are a great remarkable fruit. He are constructed in the same architectural style as the honorable sausage. Difference being skin of sausage are habitually consumed, while it are not advisable to eat rapping of banana.

Perhaps are also intrissing the following differences between the two objects. Banana are held aloft while consuming, sausage are usually left in reclining position. Banana are first green in culler, then gradual turn yellowish. Sausage start out with indefinite culler (resemble terrier cotta) and retain same hue indefinitely. Sausage depend for creation upon human being or stuffing machine, while banana are pristine product of honorable mother nature. Both article resemble the other in that neither have pit or colonel of any kind.

In case of sausage both conclusions are attached to other sausages, honorable banana on opposite hand are joined on one end to the stem, other termination are entirely loose.

Finally, banana are strictly member of the vegetable kingdom, while affiliation of sausage is often undecided.

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President Emeritus Thompson of Ohio tells a story about a student who was taking an exam. He couldn't answer the last question. He thought that the professor was a pretty good friend of his, so he wrote "Only God could answer that question. Merry Christmas." The professor wrote back "God gets a hundred; you get zero. Happy New Year."

—*What the Colleges are Doing.*