

The Diary of Olivia Salamanca, M.D., 1889-1913

By Encarnacion Alzona, Ph.D., Academician

It is a distinct honor and a real privilege to me to present this short paper entitled *The Diary of Olivia Salamanca, M.D.* to the National Academy of Science and Technology. Its preparation was a delightful adventure.

Olivia Salamanca was one of the 37 Filipino students who were appointed scholars by the Philippine Government to study in the United States in 1905.¹ There were two other girls beside her. There should have been four of them, but the fourth, who obtained the highest rating in the examination, turned out to be only 12 years old, and 16 was the minimum age required by law. Her name was Felisberta Asturias. The feminists at that time must have rejoiced over her memorable feat.

Luckily the parents of Olivia Salamanca, unlike many Filipino parents at that time, were willing to permit their daughter to study in that faraway country, then little known to the Filipinos.

Arriving in the United States in 1905, she was sent to St. Paul, Minn. to finish the secondary course. Then, she went to Philadelphia to enroll in the Women's Medical College there, the medical course being her personal choice. Her academic record at the medical college was admirable. In her second year she won a prize in anatomy and physiology. She graduated on 1 June 1910 with an average of "A". She was then 20 years and 11 months old. She also took the civil service examination in March 1910 and passed it easily. She was one of the editors of *The Filipino*, the organ of the Filipino students in America. She visited Ithaca, New York; Lakehurst, New Jersey; Washington, D.C.; Baltimore, Md.; New York City; Providence, R.I.; Prudence Island; and Boston. Then she returned to the Philippines, arriving at Manila on 24 July 1910. She wrote in her diary:

Was up at five; got dressed in Filipino dress and went on deck. First thing I saw was a collection of white-looking

¹On 26 August 1903 the Philippine Commission passed Act No. 853 "providing for the education of Filipino students in the United States and appropriating for such purpose the sum of Seventy-Two Thousand dollars in money of the United States." It was introduced by Governor W.H. Taft, first civil governor of the Philippines under the American regime, who followed the policy of "beneficent assimilation" to win the goodwill of the Filipinos and stop their opposition to the American rule. See W.A. Sutherland, *Not by Might*, 1953, Las Cruces, New Mexico. Mr. Sutherland, Spanish secretary of Governor Taft, was the first superintendent of Filipino students in America.

buildings, at a distance apparently a city; and lo and behold I was looking at my own dear Cavite, while the boat was sailing into Manila Bay. Soon we neared Manila and launches already began to come near the S.S. *Siberia*. One of those coming from the direction of Cavite had apparently a party of people with music. Little did I at first think that this was the launch from Cavite to welcome me

The *Caviteños* had a right to be proud of her: the first *Caviteña*, to the best of my knowledge, to obtain the degree of doctor of medicine and the second Filipino woman to hold that high distinction.²

Since childhood Olivia had demonstrated exceptional intellectual qualities. Her own father, Jose Salamanca, a cultured man, founder of a private school in San Roque, Cavite, Colegio Ligaya, and a pharmacist by profession, regarded her as his smartest daughter. When she was a student in the Cavite High School, she was admired for her recitation of poems in both Spanish and English. Also she demonstrated exceptional histrionic talent when she took part in dramatic performances. Without any guidance from a teacher, she learned to play the piano. How pleasantly surprised was Maestro Manuel Ruiz y Javier, her elder sister's teacher, when he came to their house one day and found her playing with remarkable neatness the piano exercises of her sister. He offered to teach her and was greatly pleased to find out that Olivia was a perfectionist, never abandoning a piece until she could play it without a mistake. Inspired by his young pupil, he composed a mazurka which he titled *Olivia*. Indeed she was a prodigy.

While many of her contemporaries delighted in reading romantic novels such as those written by Carlota Braeme and the like, she chose to read Plato's *Republic*; and *Recollections of Socrates*; Herbert Spencer's *Data of Ethics*; Dante's *Divina Commedia*; Homer's *Iliad and Odyssey*; Vergil's *Aeneid*; Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*; Lombroso's *The Criminal*; Klopstock's *Messiah*; G. de Grey's *Las leyes sociologicas*; J.J. Rousseau's *El contrato social*; Gustavo la Iglesia's *Tolstoismo y anarquismo*; Esteban de la Boetie's *La esclavitud voluntaria*; Ernest Renan's *El Porvenir de la ciencia*; J. Kropotkine's *La conquista del pan*; Ernesto Haeckel's *Los enigmas del universo*; Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*; Charles Lamb's *Chimney Sweep, Decay of Beggars, Roast Pig, Essays of Elia*; Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter*; George Eliot's *Romola*; Milton's *Paradise Lost*; Victor Hugo's *Los miserables*; Emerson's *Essays*; Boswell's *Samuel Johnson*; Richter's *Titan*; Leigh Hunt's *Imagination and Fancy, Wit and Humor, Men, Women and Books, Jar of Honey from Mt. Hybla*; Bulwer Lytton's *The Caxtons, My Novel*; Hazlitt's *Round Table, Table Talk,*

²The first one was Dr. Honoria Acosta of Pangasinan who graduated from the same medical school on 26 May 1909 with honor.



Olivia Salamanca, M.D. In cap and gown.



Olivia Salamanca at the age of 16.

Plain Speaker, Sketches and Essays; Carlyle's Cromwell's Letters; Sienkiewicz's Life and Death; Eucken's The Problem of Human Life; Shakespeare's dramas, etcetera.

With such ponderous intellectual pabulum, she developed into a profound thinker, as a perusal of her diary, letters, and autobiography (though unfinished) clearly reveals.

She devoted her spare time to reading books, even when she was not feeling well. In her diary during her sojourn in Baguio, we find her commentaries on striking passages that she had read. Intellectuals sought her company, because the breadth of her knowledge made conversation with her most rewarding. An entry in her diary on 9 November 1912 reads: “. . . Had an interesting talk with Fr. Luis Lopez . . . was surprised at my wide grasp of things” She was fond of writing down her thoughts and impressions of people. Her sensitivity was remarkable. Had she been granted a longer life, she would undoubtedly become one of the Philippines' great writers.

In general, Filipinos honor and admire intellectuals, such as, Doctor Olivia Salamanca. As already stated, they gave her a splendid welcome when she returned from America with a doctor of medicine degree which she fully deserved; for in America with her brilliant academic record she demonstrated the intellectual capacity of her countrymen, which at that time was doubted by many Americans. They banqueted her and invited her to speak at important public celebrations. In the musical-literary program to commemorate the 14th anniversary of the execution of the Thirteen Martyrs of Cavite, held in the Teatro Caviteño on the night of 12 September 1910, she was one of the principal speakers. Her speech was in Spanish, then the current language of educated Filipinos and her home language. It was a patriotic speech, paying tribute to the Thirteen Martyrs and pointing out the significance of their sacrifice. May I quote here a portion of it which seems to have a certain relevance to the present situation in our country.

¿Y qué nos enseña la muerte heroica de estos ilustres hijos de Cavite?

Los Trece Mártires pertenecieron a diversas profesiones, lo cual demuestra que para servir a la patria, no se necesita ser expresamente un abogado, un político, ó, un soldado.

Para poder servirla, se necesita abnegacion y mucho sacrificio, como asi no han escatimado hasta su vida aquellos cuya memoria conmemoramos hoy.

Para amar y servir a la Patria no cabe distinción de religión, de estado social y profesional; no cabe distinción de language, de sexo y de filiación, y por esto mismo para poder levantarla al nivel de otras naciones es preciso que nosotros los hombres, las mujeres, y los niños, los obreros, los estudiantes y los profesionales; ricos y pobres; catolicos, protestantes y aglipayanos nos unamos los unos a los otros en masa compacta y única, ya que en la unión esta la fuerza.

Con gran dolor he notado que aquí entre nosotros existe una division social muy evidente que no debiera existir, porque todos nosotros como buenos filipinos abrigamos una misma aspiración, sostenemos un mismo pensamiento y circula en nuestras venas la misma sangre — La Sangre de Rizal. ¿Porqué no sacrificar sentimientos y ambiciones personales, cuando se trata de una labor que requiere union y fraternidad?

She was one of the charter members and the first secretary of the Philippine Antituberculosis Society which was founded on 29 July 1910. Towards the end of the same year she was found to be suffering from tuberculosis. She was at her office on the Escolta (No. 105) to attend a meeting of the Philippine Antituberculosis Society. While getting things ready for it, she wrote in her diary, "long spells of cough seized me, which left me, for a time, weak and breathless. Often enough I have had before this time similar coughing spells, but as I felt strong enough to work, I did not pay any attention to it. Today, however, because of the cough and the general weakness which was beginning to get hold of me, I was very much disinclined to work and exertion. I was feverish, nervous and dyspneic. . . ."

When Mrs. Martin F. Egan, the president of the Society, and Dr. W.E. Musgrave, member of the board of directors, entered the office, she wrote, "they noticed how I coughed, how ill I looked; so Dr. Musgrave suggested that I go out to San Juan del Monte and promised to have a house built there for me, even though at his own expense, about which Mrs. Egan suggested to have the Society pay for it. Dr. Musgrave made a slight examination and was rather rough to me. This same time I remember Mrs. Egan treated me very impolitely by giving me her back as an answer to a just question. I asked her whether she could come to the office the following Thursday, as I had to go to San Isidro to fulfill an engagement she herself advised me to make. Soon afterward I left the office extremely depressed and downhearted, because of my hard luck and unfair treatment I had received." She continued:

As soon as I got home, I told the people in the house of the advice of Dr. Musgrave and of the seriousness of my condition; also that I intended to go to San Isidro that day and sleep there that night. After lunch, they very kindly advised me to rest awhile

At 4 o'clock we left Plaza de Goiti in a *calesa* for San Juan. When we got there, Dr. Garcia, the resident physician, was very glad to see me, and was all attention and kindness. We were shown the hospital, grounds, and cottages. We were introduced to his mother and his only sister . . . We lingered here for 1-1/2 hours and then left with the understanding that I was to return to stay there that night and that Dr. Garcia was to go to the house to get me. Dr. Musgrave had telephoned him that same day about my condition and my

Articles of Incorporation
of
The Philippine Antituberculosis Society
now all men by these presents
that we, a majority of whom are in
the Philippine Islands, have this day volun-
tarily associated ourselves together for the purpose of
forming a corporation under the laws of the Philippine
Islands

And we hereby certify:

Corporate Name

First - That the name of said corporation
is The Philippine Antituberculosis Society

General Purposes

Second - That the purposes for which such cor-
poration is formed are:
To advance the knowledge of tuberculosis
encouraging original research in the part
members and others;
To collect and record facts concerning
as ascertained through original research
otherwise and to disseminate information
in discussion among its members and by
publication of papers

First page of the Articles of Incorporation of the Philippine Antituberculosis Society in her handwriting.

admittance. My first insight into a sanatorium, for, when I first went there with Dr. V.G. Heiser and others, it was being fixed and altered only.

At 6:30 Tio Pablo took me to San Juan, seeing that it was getting dark and Dr. Garcia had not arrived. As soon as I got there, I went immediately to Dr. Garcia's house and was there for a long time talking with the doctor's mother who told me about Dr. Garcia's studies, his illness and finally his marriage to which she was very much opposed After waiting for a long time, Dr. Garcia arrived and we had supper with fun and jokes now and then to whet our appetite. After supper Dr. Garcia took me to the hospital dining hall to see the patients' meal and to the hospital itself to see the patients. Then we sat down on the piazza adjoining his rooms until ten o'clock, when I retired to my tent. The tent was pitched on top of the stone wall surrounding the hospital grounds, the floor being of wood and the rest of canvas. There were two army cots in it, one for me and one for the nurse, one wash stand, one pitcher and one basin and a clean towel. There was no soap and³

In the following year, 1911, she was assigned to the hospital in Baguio in the hope that the mountain air of that summer resort would help her recover her health. There she led an active life, remaining in her cottage only when she was not feeling well. Nearly every day she had callers, Filipinos and Americans. She went out for strolls with friends. She studied French and read books. Sometimes she embroidered, crocheted, and sewed. Now and then she played the phonograph that an admirer had brought to her cottage. She continued her diary. Here is one entry:

Aug. 18, 1911:

I am sorry to be as cynical as I appear, but I cannot help it. It seems to me I have not had the sympathy and the cooperation I ought to have. Since the beginning, you all seem to be ready to condemn, to blame and to provoke me, rather than to encourage and give me hope. I have been alone — as far as my family is concerned — in my battle for life. He alone has sympathized, has encouraged and helped me in my misfortune. Do they think for a moment, I wonder, that I am satisfied to be thus deprived of my chances for success, accomplishment and work? Little do they know and realize my heartache, my despair at being handicapped. A nature, such as mine is, ambitious to an extreme, cannot, will not accept unwarranted and unjustifiable limitations. Physically disabled as I am, I do not allow my ailments to interfere with

³From a typewritten copy, incomplete and damaged. Her diary for 1910 and 1913 in my possession is incomplete.

my intellectual activities. My life was meant to be a busy life and my mind a busy mind, so regardless of place or circumstances, there shall be something for me to do.

Her self-analysis:

August 26, 1911

Embarrassing as is the thought I cannot help entering it into this book of my life, for the truth of it seems to me more and more convincing. I am not by any means pretty, rather of the common, ordinary type of face; my conversation possesses nothing of the charm, vivacity and brilliance of most entertaining conversationalists; my manners, if anything, are awkward, lacking that polished and refined self-possession of a refined and educated girl — and yet I know, I must confess blushing, I must have some magnetic charm hidden somewhere that makes all people enjoy even a minute of companionship with me. Whatever it is, You put it there, oh Lord, and may it serve the purpose You intended it for. It is the one source of happiness to me, for thru this magnetic charm I am able to go near and help others.

Concerning the treatment she was given in Baguio, she wrote:

September 4, 1911

Rejoice at the fact that I shall be the first one in the P.I. to be subjected to the use of tuberculin in tuberculosis. I am glad, because I afford the best chances for its actions to be carefully noted. If tuberculin proves effective in the care of T.B. by the experiment made on me, I would feel as if I have rendered a public service to humanity. Should it fail (there is no occasion for such thought, for I would know in time whether it is doing me good or not) then I shall be glad also for it would save many from its dangers. Help me, Jesus dear! And may the experiment be carried out successfully, so that thousands of useless lives may be made useful by it.

During her time, there were many Americans in the Philippines: in the government service, in business, and in the professions. She worked with some of them and met many more, giving her ample opportunities to observe their attitude and behavior. Here are her impressions:

Feb. 27 Tuesday (Baguio, 1912)

Miss Dick cursed the P.I., which hurt me deeply. Such ingratitude!! Bah!

Feb. 28, 1912

Was very indignant at the ingratitude of Americans; no wonder Filipinos don't like them here, when they despise us and everything Filipino, and yet they make their livelihood in the P.I. They say everything here is bad, etc., etc.; but why remain? If Filipinos are lazy, it is not their fault. The climate demands that they be less energetic.

13. 1912 Tuesday

Inspection; heard Worcester spoke to
of me. Dr. Reed went to Post Office
another impression of Mr. Trull's who
went to Gov. Centre. Then the disagree-
woman - an agnostic, superstitious.
- afternoon; walk after supper
spoke to Worcester. Boys came - be-
from. I was very much disappo-
stop to Olive. Dear, stop it; don't
a slave of your physical self.

14. Wednesday -

St. Valentine's Day. Went to Sun-
house. Sewed + wrote to Dr. Was bed in
afternoon. Walk. Laundry.

15. Thursday

Got up. waited for Dr. or gave her
Went to Summer house. to read
to Papa + sister. In afternoon

All good & kind. Time out the
ful. No letters - missed some.
Not sleep well.

11, 1912 Sunday
Church criticism by Sister. T
worth, Wongfee & August Com
er Angela very kind. Meet G
pt. Parker paid. Don't be too pe
again. please don't & think be
you speak. Nice letter of apprecia
on. Sister. August very tired in
house. very kind to me, Mrs. Al
len had not home. Home
time. told you well. O
his and the one

12, 1912 Monday
Home all day very sunny, se
mon. Both during at night. you
P. M. in the house.

A page from her Diary.

They are all alike — wake up, Olivia; they do not deserve the consideration you show them. They have tried my patience so much by their continuous fault-finding and criticism that I feel like running into the woods and not see any American for the rest of my life. I have tried to meet them more than halfway, do all I can for them to promote good understanding between them and my people, but they are not worthy of the trouble.

Her patriotism was stirred by those tactless Americans.

Doctor Salamanca was an articulate feminist. She wrote to a correspondent on 30 June 1911:

Do not take one woman or two as a type of all women. Besides, if some of them — the majority, if you wish it — seem to be so regardless of men's feelings — it is not their fault. The seeming inevitable passive attitude within which society (the men) has limited woman's sphere of action is to be blamed for it. She is not permitted to take the initiative in most matters, not even in matters pertaining to her heart. Society seems to have placed her so high and she is condemned unmercifully when she falls. Society has placed so much personal responsibility upon her, but provided her with very little justice.

In another letter written by her we find this passage:

Well, I am a harmless and inexperienced little suffragette, with rather immature ideas yet as to what an ideal and useful life should be. It is a problem that confronts me now.

She was one of the early feminists in the Philippines. There were very few in her time.

On 21 May she left Baguio for Manila. Apparently her health had not improved, for she was confined in the Philippine General Hospital early in June.

She entered in her diary:

June 7-12 at Philippine General Hospital. Met Miss Williams and Mrs. Smith, very kind and good nurses. Miss Tirona, very kind to me. Met Miss Lopez who called with Mrs. de Veyra and Miss Zamora. Flowers daily from G.P. Dr. Musgrave and Mrs. Egan very kind to me; also Flores and Garcia. Dr. Ubaldo sent flowers. Dr. Reyes sent card and magazines. Mrs. Taulbu came to see me every morning. Dr. Acosta peeps in once in a while. Maria José, Juabita, Dr. Nicolas, and relatives came to see me.

She reported to duty on 17 June. She took part in the celebration of Rizal's birthday, 19 June. There was a party at her house on her birthday, first of July. Everybody was kind to her, she wrote in her diary.

Despite her poor health, she led a remarkably active life. She sailed for Hong Kong on 6 August, returning to Manila on the 15th. Then she was off to the southern islands on the 17th. She stopped at Mangarin, Mindoro, which she noted in her diary had

a beautiful beach; and then proceeded to Iloilo, Molo, Jaro, and Cebu. She was back in Manila on the 27th and on the same day embarked for Hong Kong, her second trip to the Crown Colony. She returned to Manila on 7 September. A week later she went to Naic by train, which she found uncomfortable, but she was pleased with the hospitality of the people. On 23 September she made a trip to Laguna Province and she was impressed by its "rich vegetation, fine sceneries, and imposing Mt. Makiling." She visited Sta. Cruz, its capital, and Pagsanjan. She returned to Cavite on 28 September.

She attended the meetings of the Philippine Medical Society held in Pasay from 4 to 7 November 1912. There she met Dr. M. Paz Mendoza and her impression of her is noted in her diary: "very kind and gentle." Vice Governor Gilbert addressed the Society and congratulated the Filipino women doctors on their attendance.

On 27 February 1913 she wrote in her diary:

Seriously ill. Medical consultation. Arrival of priest. Three hypo-injections. People seriously alarmed. Kindness of Dr. Leon. Offer of all Cavite physicians and *practicantes* to do anything they can for me.

Surprise presents in form of money, candy, etc. from people.

Surprise check from Burgos said to have come from "Relief Fund".

Her last entry, dated 13 April, expressed her gratitude to a friend who sent her a cheque. Written with pencil, it is now faded and almost illegible.

On the 11th of July 1913 she passed away. She was 24 years and 10 days old. Those whom the gods love die early is a Greek saying.

I conclude with a romantic confession of Doctor Salamanca:

I remember of two occasions only on which I truly cried, I mean the true genuine cry that comes from a wounded and suffering heart — not the cry of wounded pride and humiliated self-respect. One was when my father embraced me for the last time as I was leaving for the States; this was six years ago; and the other was when, through some heavenly warning or premonition, perhaps intuition, I came suddenly into the realization, without any tangible proof, at the time, that the one I loved was unfaithful to me. This was more than a year ago. I have a capacity for bearing sorrow, disappointment, pain, physical and moral, deprivations of any kind and troubles of all sorts often without showing any indication of the struggle in my facial expression or my mood. I think this is the reason why I have won the reputation here³ and at San Juan del Monte of being always happy and cheerful no matter how terrible the struggle within. Some people think that it is due to a cold and indifferent temperament, but I feel it all just as keenly and as

⁴Baguio



Olivia Salamanca in Filipino dress.

deeply, only self-mastery and self-restraint come to my rescue. The importance and the essential utility of these two forces are some of the good things I have learned during my five years exile in the United States.

Doctor of medicine, thinker, patriot, humanitarian, and feminist, Olivia Salamanca deserves eternal remembrance.

THE DIARY OF OLIVIA SALAMANCA, M.D., (1889-1913)

Fe del Mundo, M.D. Discussant

Dr. Alzona, you have always been an inspiration, a dear and ever helpful friend; hence I may not be the right person to comment because I am truly biased in favor of Dr. Alzona. I'm very grateful for having been chosen as one of her discussants.

Two persons deeply inspired me in this paper. First, the subject, Dr. Olivia Salamanca and more than this, I confess that I'm more inspired by the author. Well, I have heard of Dr. Olivia Salamanca and read about her but nothing half as detailed nor as full of compassion, understanding and inspiration as the one that was presented to us today.

The biography I have read about Dr. Salamanca is a very brief one and mostly about her medical activities and I must say that her professional life was so short that one may not be truly impressed with her activities.

I am sorry that at that time she was suffering from tuberculosis, we did not have the marvelous drugs we now possess; otherwise I am sure that in one or two months she would have recovered; who knows may be she would be sitting on this stage. I am also sorry that at that time she only spoke about tuberculin which is not even used now. Therefore, it was very unfortunate that she had this disease far ahead of the advances in medicine, particularly in tuberculosis.

We did not realize in her biography that she was so cultured and even from her diary, if Dr. Alzona ably quoted the words. Dr. Salamanca commanded English very well, very fluently, the right choice of words and I must say that it's far beyond our expectations. I presume that she studied English of course, in high school and five years in the United States.

Her use of Spanish language also was excellent. I was thinking that she would talk in Caviteño Spanish. But surprisingly how beautifully she expressed her thoughts and her emotions in Spanish. It is really wonderful and I am not surprised now, having received the information of the books she read in her time, how far advanced she was for her age. How highly cultured she was from the proper choice of the best books she could get hold of. It is evident she was not limited to medicine, as is our usual tendency.

I know she went to Medical School at the Philadelphia Medical Women's College, at that time and even until recently, the only Medical College for women. Unfortunately, that has been

changed now. It is no longer a college for women only after having celebrated its 100th anniversary. I understand that it has to be co-educational to enable it to receive grants. I know that the first women from here who studied in the United States chose the Medical Women's College and they were very outstanding. These are Dr. Acosta, the first one, and Dr. Salamanca.

From what we heard of Dr. Salamanca, we had appreciated and honored her and so, the Philippine Medical Women's Association has a plaza, this Olivia Salamanca Plaza in her honor located at the corner of General Luna and T. Kalaw, with a memorial marker for her. We got the permission of the Historical Association and perhaps Dr. Alzona was one of those who granted us that permit. I am not probably updated but I know that so far, it is the only marker for a Filipino woman physician, and so, we have honored Dr. Salamanca and just as Dr. Alzona said in her last sentence, she deserves to be eternally remembered. We have also obtained a brief biography of Dr. Salamanca of which we have published in our Philippine Medical Women's Journal and it is in our library in the Medical Women Association Building. I am full of admirations of Dr. Salamanca but I will say that this was enhanced by what we heard from Dr. Alzona. With your permission, Dr. Alzona, I would like to present to our medical women a copy of your paper and I would ask them to read it because as I said what little we know is not even one tenth of what you have written about her in this paper.

I am truly surprised how a diary can become a veritable paper full of admiration for the one who wrote it but of course that depends on the writer. I wondered how a diary could be presented in such an interesting and inspiring way, but I have a feeling only Dr. Alzona can do that. I've written a diary only when I am abroad, but here, I don't really find time to write a diary. I am afraid I have lost an opportunity to be written about someday. I don't know whether I should start writing a diary now. I usually write when I am abroad more or less first to make an account of my expenses, my problems, and also the people I met so that when I forget the person I just look up my diary and I can get their names there. But I receive no less than 5 or 6 diaries on Christmas and I must tell you most of them are empty.

The contents of Dr. Salamanca's diary amaze me; how one could write so much and so vividly as Dr. Salamanca did. In a way perhaps it is better not to write a diary especially when you have disappointments. And I thought that when I heard that this was going to be about Dr. Salamanca I said, I wonder whether there will be some romance in it because she died so early and I'm glad that Dr. Alzona included the romantic part because it is also a little bit more impressive, and more touching.

I express again my admiration for the author but because of her patience in trying to decipher the faded handwriting of Dr. Salamanca. I am sure that if I were the one perhaps after one paragraph I would have ended there. Then the thoroughness with which Dr. Alzona took note of all the details which Dr. Salamanca expressed is remarkable. As I said, I don't know if anybody else really could have written with such patience, understanding, and full of meaning, as Dr. Alzona did. I just can't help it. I just said that both have inspired me and I also admire the fact that even now, Dr. Alzona is so eloquent. You must have noticed how she read her paper.

Dr. Alzona, may I reiterate our expression of thanks for putting one of our colleagues, Dr. Salamanca, in the limelight. I think more of us would like to read about Dr. Salamanca and emulate her patriotism, devotion, understanding, her ability to take her disappointments and sorrows even with humor. Thank you Dr. Alzona, for continuing the inspiring work you are doing; even at this stage we see how very useful Dr. Alzona is. I know she can never retire. Thank you.

THE DIARY OF OLIVIA SALAMANCA, M.D. (1889-1913)

Anacleta Villacorta-Agoncillo, M.D.
Discussant

I am glad that Dr. del Mundo mentioned already what I wanted to say. Even so, I would like to add that Dr. Salamanca's death at an early age was really an irony because she died of the very disease in which she specialized. She must have felt extreme sadness when she found out that she had herself contracted the dreaded disease, knowing quite well that there was, at the time, no specific treatment to the infection. If I am not mistaken, the antibiotics were not yet discovered, and the patients were confined only at a hospital known as Santolan. Later, the Quezon Institute was built specifically for tubercular patients. Here, they were given the classical treatment, which mainly consisted of good food, sunlight, and fresh air. Then pneumothorax was practised in the hospital, the procedure being to collapse the lungs to give them complete rest. In the 1920's when a person was found to be suffering from T.B., he/she was considered already doomed. He/she was usually shunned by society and the family was looked down upon, the common belief among the laity being that all the members of the patient's family were tuberculous. People called this *lahi, lahi-lahi* or inherited. Although this could be possible if the family did not observe the necessary precautions, it does not follow that all the members of the family would be infected. Nowadays, with the discovery of the antibiotics, tuberculosis is curable. It is interesting to note that tuberculin was used to treat Dr. Salamanca. What we know of tuberculin is that it is used only to test the presence of t.b. in the body, not as a treatment.

Well, I have a few questions to ask, Dr. Alzona, could it not be possible that Dr. Salamanca's condition was aggravated by her disillusionment with her boyfriend which ultimately led to her death?

Dr. Alzona:

In general, she had many admirers and not only one invited her. In fact, that physician in Baguio told her to stop receiving callers who came every day and who sent her flowers, fruits, and phonograph records. She did not lack admirers, so one love affair would not affect her health at all. Her younger sister, Socorro (Coring), is still alive but could not come here because she is suffering from arthritis and is deaf.

Dr. Agoncillo:

How would you place Dr. Salamanca in the history of Filipino women?

Dr. Alzona:

I think she was one of the most inspiring Filipino women. She was very much advanced for her age, being of a thinking kind, and having read much literary and philosophical works - Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, and others. I think she was only twenty years old when she received her medical degree. So I believe she occupies a very high place among the women of the world and not only of our country. She was truly a very remarkable person.

Dr. T. Agoncillo:

Regarding the culture of Dr. Salamanca, she reminds me of Dr. Acosta Sison, because when I was taking philosophy at the University of the Philippines she was my classmate; she also used to take courses in literature and higher courses in philosophy, and even discussed with our philosophy professor, Dr. Dharendra Nath Roy. She was, however, already matured at the time, compared with Dr. Salamanca who was very young. I think that the life of Dr. Salamanca should serve as an inspiration especially to the narrow specialists of today who know more and more about less and less and, more especially, to the young medical students of today. During our time, we read philosophy because we were told by our professor to do so; in the case of Dr. Salamanca, she read books outside her discipline because she wanted to widen her horizon.

Dr. Alzona:

I think she was really an intelligent young student.

Dr. Fe del Mundo:

I would like to add that in memory of Dr. Salamanca, a hospital, a government hospital in Cavite, was established and named after her.