

**ALVAREZ DE ANTONIO,
ADUARTE DIEGO**

**THE PHILIPPINE
ISLANDS,
1493-1898,
VOLUME 30 OF 55**

**Antonio Alvarez de Abreu
Diego Aduarte
The Philippine Islands,
1493-1898, Volume 30 of 55**

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The Philippine Islands, 1493-1898, Volume 30 of 55 / Explorations by early navigators, descriptions of the islands and their peoples, their history and records of the catholic missions, as related in contemporaneous books and manuscripts, showing the political, economic, commercial and religious conditions of those islands from their earliest relations with European nations to the close of the nineteenth century, Volume XXX, 1640:

Содержание

Preface	5
Commerce between the Philippines and Nueva España	16
Period I	18
Period II	19
Justification of the maintenance of the Philipinas Islands and their commerce	20
Point first	22
Point second	54
Point third	61
Point fourth	65
Informatory decree regarding the question to what extent and on what plan shall the commerce of the islands with Nueva España hereafter proceed	81
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	91

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1640; but its two documents are retrospective from that date. The first, an historical survey of Philippine commerce with Nueva España, from its beginning until 1640, is taken from the *Extracto historial* (Madrid, 1736), a work devoted to that subject and compiled by order of the Spanish government. The second is Aduarte's noted history of the Dominican missions in the Philippines; although much of it is briefly synopsized, its great length permits us only to begin it here, two more volumes being necessary to complete it.

Valuable information regarding the trade between the Philippines and Nueva España is furnished by the *Extracto historial* (Madrid, 1736), from which we take such matter as pertains to that commerce up to 1640. A brief summary of royal ordinances thereon is followed by a memorial sent (1640) to the royal visitor for Mexico, Juan Palafox y Mendoza, by Juan Grau y Monfalcón, agent at the Spanish court for the Philippine Islands. As Palafox is commissioned to investigate the condition, needs, and commerce of the islands, Grau sends him this memorial by way of information thereon, and as a brief for the islands in their controversy over the grievous restrictions placed on their commerce with Nueva España (which is mainly their export thither of Chinese silk fabrics). Grau's argument is carefully divided and subdivided; it is not always ingenuous, and sometimes he overshoots his mark, or uses the same premises for different and at times incongruous results; but it is on the whole a forcible presentation of the difficulties and embarrassments

under which that commerce is laboring, and even the colony striving for existence. He constantly urges the great importance of the Philippines to the Spanish crown, not only as a center of missionary effort in the Orient, but for the defense of the Moluccas and the spice trade, the maintenance of Eastern India, and the diversion from that region and from the American coasts of the Dutch enemy, on whom the Philippine colony is a continual and effective check; all these considerations are discussed at length. He lauds the bravery, loyalty, and piety of the Spaniards in those islands, and their great services to the crown. He computes the expenditures necessary to sustain the Philippine colony, and the revenues which it yields, and shows that its actual expense is but moderate, and far less than is supposed. From even this should properly be deducted the expenses of sustaining Moluco, a burden which falls on the Philippines, although the Spice Islands and their trade are the property of Portugal; such computation leaves but 26,000 pesos annually as the actual cost of maintaining the Philippines, Grau proposes two plans for securing this end: one, to pay all the expenses of the islands directly from the royal treasury; the other, to grant them a sufficient amount of commerce – the latter being the most expedient and desirable method. Granting this, it remains to consider the character, amount, and form of such commerce; Grau expatiates on the third of these in especial, recounting the annoyances and injuries inflicted at Acapulco on Philippine merchants and their goods.

Grau notices the accusations that have been made against the Philippine commerce, of infractions of the ordinances regulating it; while not denying these, he claims that they are not more extensive or serious than those that are committed in the India trade, and do not deserve the severity which has been employed against them. In behalf of the islands, Grau asks for an increase in the amount of trade permitted to them; for the restrictions on their commerce have greatly reduced their wealth, on which heavier burdens are constantly laid by the necessity of defending themselves from so many and so powerful enemies. The population of Manila is also much larger than when the trade was first limited, and needs more for its support; moreover, much of the amount permitted is granted to convents and other institutions, and to certain privileged persons, and various deductions are made from its total, thus diminishing its actual value. Grau argues that a sufficient increase in the trade of the islands would put a stop to illegal shipments of goods; and that the exporters cannot make any reasonable profits unless they are more liberally treated. He suggests that they be allowed to export goods freely, a limitation being placed only on the returns of silver therefor; and urges that the products of the islands be free from all restrictions, and not included in the amount permitted – which latter should apply only to Chinese goods – for which he adduces various forcible arguments. Discussing then the commerce between Nueva España and Peru, he shows that the suspension of this trade during 1635–40 has been very

injurious to the Philippines, for various reasons; it has also hurt both Peru and Mexico, especially by checking the latter's silk industry, which found a market in Peru. He defends the Peruvian merchants from the accusations made against them of transgressing the trade permission that had been accorded to them, and urges that, for the sake of all the western colonies, this permission be restored to Peru.

This memorial by Grau is followed by several royal decrees (dated February 14, 1640) addressed to Palafox; these are mainly "informatory," and lay before that official the representations made by the citizens of the islands regarding their distressed condition – ordering him to investigate the affairs of Philipinas carefully and thoroughly, and report thereon to the home government. In later volumes of this series will be presented a considerable part of the *Extracto historial* – a work which, as we understand, has not before been Englished – on account of the importance attached not only to the book as an official report, but to the commerce of the Philippines as a factor in the history and development of that Spanish colony in the Far East.

Aduarte's *Historia de la provincia del Sancto Rosario* (Manila, 1640) is here presented for the first time in English dress – partly in full translation and partly in synopsis, because this work, besides being voluminous, contains much about Japan and other countries, and other matter outside our scope. The earlier chapters (i–ix) of book i, here briefly summarized, describe the foundation of the province and the voyage of the first Dominican

missionaries to Manila; also the unsuccessful effort at the same time to open a mission in China. In chapter x is described their entrance into Manila, their affectionate reception by all, and their establishment there as a religious community. The new arrivals are initiated into missionary labor at Bataan, and soon afterward are placed in charge of the Pangasinan natives, and of the Chinese at Manila. With the aid of Bishop Salazar, the Dominicans secure a piece of land for their convent and church; and they receive many gifts and alms from pious citizens. They labor for the good of the Spanish residents of Manila, and soon effect a great change in their morals and religious life. They prosper, and are able to erect a new and handsome stone church and the other buildings necessary for their establishment; but the noted fire of 1603 destroys all this great work. It is afterward rebuilt, even more solidly than before, and all by the alms of the faithful. Chapters xii-xv are devoted to an account of an image of our Lady of the Rosary possessed by this Dominican convent, and of the miracles wrought through its agency. Some of the friars had complained of the severity of their mode of life and of the rules imposed upon them; but all finally agree thereto, with great self-forgetfulness and devotion. Aduarte proceeds to recount the great advantages arising to the province from this procedure, and the holiness displayed by the Dominican religious in Luzón – statements confirmed by various letters written to Spain by trustworthy persons, not only within but without that order.

Chapter xix is devoted to an account of the Dominicans' first mission-field, that of Bataán, and their labors therein. This field had been transiently occupied by other missionaries, but was so hard and barren that none of them had persevered in its cultivation. But the Dominicans "licked their fingers over the hardships," and devote themselves most heroically to the care of these poor souls, and to learning their language – a difficult task for old men. One of them, Pedro de Bolaños, is overcome by the labors and privations of this sort of life, and is compelled to return to Manila, where he finally dies; and the others suffer much from illness. As soon as the fathers learn the language of those natives, they acquire great influence over the natives, especially through the confessional. They greatly abate drunkenness, the worst vice of the Indians, by "sending to Coventry" every intoxicated person; and they persuade the heathen to abandon their idols and superstitious practices, and even (perhaps the greatest triumph of all) to set free many slaves, and restore what they had taken from others in usury and by other unjust means. All this is accomplished within one year; and Bataán acquires a wide reputation for the religious and peaceful life which its natives lead. Various marvelous works are wrought for the fathers by divine power; "on the other hand, the devil played some tricks on them." They have to encounter witches and devils, but the Lord gives them the victory over these evil beings.

Pangasinan is another mission-field assigned to the Dominicans, which also had been barren of gospel fruit through

the obstinate hostility of its natives to the Christian faith. At first, they try to drive away the Dominicans also, but the holy lives of those fathers work a miracle in their hard hearts, and convert them to the faith. This is told in a letter from Bishop Benavides to the pope, written in 1598. He relates their hardships, patience, and devotion, in the face of the hatred and hostility of the natives – so bitter that the missionaries are entreated, not only by Spanish officers but by Bishop Salazar, to leave Pangasinan. But they refuse to go, and finally their persistent and unwearied kindness to the Indians, and their consistent Christian characters, soften those hard hearts; and, after three years of patient waiting, the fathers gather a rich harvest of souls. Those Indians are excellent Christians, and show most edifying devotion and piety, a statement thoroughly confirmed by later reports. The early persecution of the missionaries is explained by the fact that after their arrival the oracles of the native idols became silent, and by false accusations which the devil and his emissaries concoct against the religious. The conversions and pious acts of two prominent chiefs are related, as well as various miracles which occur in this mission.

The leading events and persons of the next mission (1588–89) are described. Amid the greatest difficulties and dangers, those religious make the perilous voyage to Manila. The first provincial chapter-meeting is held in that city, on June 12, 1588; on this occasion the new province is organized, and officers regularly elected. Some progress is made this year in Pangasinan; but some

of the natives are obstinately hostile, and the missionaries are often ill-treated, and sometimes in danger of death. Their acts of charity to the Indians, and especially their success in curing some sick persons, gradually win the affection of the natives; and the fathers are able to do much to improve the condition of those people – above all, in furnishing them hospitals and medical care for the sick, thus saving many lives.

Soon after reaching the islands the Dominicans also undertake to minister to the Chinese who come to Manila. In this field, as among the Indians, they obtain a foothold by their generous and unwearied care for the sick; and soon they erect a hospital for the care of poor Chinese sick persons, which rapidly increases in size and in the aid bestowed upon it, and where nearly all the patients are converted before they leave it. One of their converts devotes himself to the service of the hospital for many years, and greatly aids the fathers in charge of it. New buildings are erected, and the number of converts is greatly increased. The village of Binondo is enlarged, and a large and beautiful church is erected, for this Chinese Christian population. The pious works of several of these converts are related.

The harvest of souls continues to increase, and in 1589 a small but helpful reënforcement of missionaries arrives at the islands. A full account is given of their labors in Pangasinan and Bataán, the marvels wrought for them, the renunciation of idols by the heathen, the devotion and piety displayed by the converts. Fathers Castro and Benavides go to China (1590) to attempt the

establishment of a mission there; but their enterprise is a failure, on account of the Chinese hostility to foreigners. Juan Cobo, acting provincial during Castro's absence, visits the missions and makes some arrangements for their more advantageous management. Excellent crops for several years, and the advice and aid of the missionaries, increase the temporal prosperity of the Indians; and they become more friendly to the religious, and more inclined to receive religious instruction.

Gomez Perez Dasmariñas arrives at Manila in 1590, as governor of the islands. Dissensions soon arise between him and Bishop Salazar, and the latter departs for Spain (in June, 1591), accompanied by Benavides. The governor is afterward slain by his own Chinese oarsmen. In April, 1592, Fray Alonso Ximenes is chosen provincial; the various missions are apportioned, and certain ordinances for their conduct and the better government of the province are enacted. Fray Juan de Castro and Fray Juan Cobo die soon afterward, of whom Aduarte presents full biographical accounts. A special assembly of the religious is convened in December, 1594, at which additional rules for their conduct are adopted. They are also asked to send religious to Nueva Segovia, for which mission two fathers are allotted. Aduarte describes that province, and its conquest (1581) by the Spaniards, to prevent it from becoming a Japanese possession. The Indians of that province are so warlike that for a long time the Spaniards can keep but a precarious hold upon it; and the friars find that they can accomplish nothing there with either

Spaniards or Indians. The Dominicans, therefore, enter (1595) upon a hard and sterile field; but a considerable reënforcement of missionaries opportunely arrive to aid them, although many die while en route from España. Aduarte recounts the superstitious beliefs and observances current among the Cagayán Indians, notions which shape or modify nearly all of their social customs; they are, from his standpoint, slaves to the devil in all things. The Dominican missionaries, now eight in number, plan and begin the spiritual conquest of Cagayán. For nearly a year they endure, on account of the hostility of the natives, great sufferings from hunger, exposure, and apparently vain efforts; but gradually they subdue the natives by their unwearied self-denial, patience, and love. Their first-fruits consist in eight converted chiefs, who are baptized at Easter (1597), and these are the beginning of a rich harvest – at first, mainly of children baptized before they die from the prevalent epidemic of smallpox. Gradually, they are able to build churches in the respective villages, and to introduce among the Indians a civilized and Christian mode of life. At the time of Aduarte's writing (ca. 1637), those people have become very fond of their religious, and ask for them to come to teach them – even changing their own residences, when necessary for their obtaining religious instruction. The supply of missionaries for that region is very inadequate, and should be promptly increased.

The Editors

July, 1905.

Commerce between the Philippines and Nueva España

[From Extracto historial.¹]

¹ The present document is taken from the Extracto historial, a work compiled (Madrid, 1736) by order of the Spanish government, for its information and guidance in the discussions then pending in the royal Council of the Indias upon the subject of the trade in Chinese silks between the Philippine Islands and Nueva España. The book is an historical résumé of that commerce, and of legislation thereon, from its beginning to 1736; it is composed mainly of important documents – decrees, memorials, etc. – from the original sources, and is divided into ten tiempos, or periods, of which the second (which covers the time from 1603 to 1640) is here presented, and the others will receive due attention in later volumes. The title-page of the Extracto (of which a facsimile precedes the present document) reads thus in English: “Historical summary of the measures now under discussion in the royal and supreme Council of the Indias, at the instance of the city of Manila and the Philipinas Islands, in regard to the form in which the commerce and trade in Chinese fabrics with Nueva España shall be conducted and continued. And for the better understanding of the subject, the important events in that commerce are noted (distinguishing and separating the periods of time), from the discovery of the Philipinas Islands and the concession of commerce to them, with whatever has occurred up to the present in the operation and at the instance of the commerce of España and its tribunal [consulado]. Compiled and arranged by order of the king and the advice of the above-named Council, and at his Majesty’s expense, by an official of the [India] House, from the papers and documents furnished by the office of the Secretary for Nueva España, and [including] other special memoirs, which the said official has here set down for the greater completeness of the work, and to throw more light on the subject. At Madrid: in the printing-house of Juan de Ariztia, in the year 1736.” The official there mentioned was Don Antonio Alvarez de Abreu; at the beginning of the work he mentions in a prefatory article the reasons for its compilation, and the plan he has followed; he claims to have reproduced

accurately the documents presented therein, and to have regarded the interests of both sides in the controversy then being waged over the Philippine commerce. One hundred copies of the Extracto were printed.

Period I
**Of what has been ordained by royal
decrees, now compiled, in regard
to the commerce of Philipinas**

1–15. [This “period” consists of a very brief summary of the laws regarding the above commerce, issued from 1593 to 1635; this matter, in fuller form, has been already given in VOLS. XVII of this series, pp. 27–50, and XXV, pp. 48–73, with which this document should be read.]

Period II

Of the debates on this commerce which occurred in the royal Council of the Indias up to the year 1640, and the commissions which on that account were entrusted to Señor Don Juan de Palafox, who, being an official of the [India] House, went as bishop of Puebla de los Angeles

Although in the collection of documents which was furnished to us by the Council, for the compilation of this Extracto, nothing appears relative to the controversies which occurred during the greater part of the last century in regard to the commerce of Philipinas, in order that the long silence on this matter – from the earliest decrees up to the year 1684, of which an account is given us by the papers in the Secretary's office (with which "Period III" begins, and which the Extracto will follow) – may not seem irreparable, it has seemed to us desirable to form the present "Period" from a printed quarto book which was placed in the hands of Señor Palafox (who is now in Nueva España) by the deputy of those islands, and has reached us among other

interesting documents. In this book are enumerated, for the purpose of furnishing information to that prelate – who was charged by the royal orders to inform [the government] regarding that affair [of the commerce] – the arguments which during the years 1638–40 were presented in behalf of the maintenance of the commerce of Philipinas, and the enlargement of the amount of trade allowed to that colony. We have not been able by any search to obtain the “Memorial” of one hundred and thirty-six sections which is said, in this printed book, to have been presented to the Council on this subject, in behalf of the city of Manila; but the insertion of the present document will not be unwelcome – not only because it contains substantially the same arguments which in following years up to the present time have been adduced, and which, it may reasonably be believed, those same islands will reproduce in the future whenever this subject is discussed; but because at the same time it presents certain information which is of no little value for better understanding the importance of that remote domain.

Justification of the maintenance of the Philipinas Islands and their commerce

To the very illustrious and reverend Señor Don Juan de Palafox y Mendoza, member of his Majesty’s Council, in the royal Council of the Indias, and bishop of Puebla de los Angeles: by Don Juan Grau y Monfalcón, procurator-general of the

Philippinas Islands, agent for the principality of Catuluña, and syndic of the city of Barcelona.

Very illustrious and reverend sir:

Although I wrote for the city of Manila, the capital of the Philippinas islands, a memorial of one hundred and thirty-six sections – at the examination and discussion of which in the Council your illustrious Lordship was present – in regard to eighty-five petitions, to which can be reduced all the more important matters which may be presented concerning those islands and their trade-route and their maintenance; and that memorial with its petitions your illustrious Lordship is carrying with you, as it is printed, so that it seems as if there were no need of further information – and even these were superfluous to one who is so well informed on all the matters which he has in his keeping, and is so quick to understand those which may come before him: nevertheless, in order that I may to some extent relieve and set free your illustrious Lordship from the burdens imposed upon your memory, as I know the number and importance of the commissions that you must execute and the matters that you must decide in Nueva España (all which will be successfully accomplished, as we are assured by your wide experience in affairs), I have determined to comprise in this single treatise the matters which concern the city of Manila, and which it can present to you. It relates to the four leading points which were entrusted by his Majesty and the royal Council of the Indias, by royal decrees, to the judicious decision and accurate

information of your Lordship, as follows:

First, to what extent and in what manner shall the commerce of those islands be tarried on?

Second, whether it will be expedient to increase and extend the permission which they at present enjoy, both in the export of merchandise and in the returns of money.

Third, whether in the amount of merchandise allowed to them shall be included the products of the islands, or only those of China shall be understood.

Fourth, whether the commerce which Perú was accustomed to hold with Nueva España shall be resumed, on account of the loss which results to the Philipinas and Nueva España from its suspension.

Point first

As for the first decree, which is so general as to include all, for treating of the commerce of the islands, which is essential to their preservation: this point, which in the memorial that I have cited is argued at length, can be reduced to an argument of three infallible propositions, of which, when two are proved, the third cannot be denied; and they are in this form.

The Philipinas Islands are absolutely necessary: first, to increase the preaching of the gospel; second, to maintain the authority, grandeur, and reputation of this crown; third, to defend the Moluco Islands and their trade; fourth, to support Eastern

India; fifth, to relieve the Western Indias from their enemies; sixth, to aid the two crowns of Castilla and Portugal² in breaking down the power of the Dutch; seventh, to protect for both crowns the commerce of China. In order to support the islands, the commerce with Nueva España is requisite and necessary; for by no other means can their defense, or means for supporting it, be provided. It immediately follows that it is also requisite and necessary to grant this commerce to the islands, or, by abandoning them, to lose all the advantages which result from their preservation, as here represented.

The first proposition of this argument consists of eight fundamental reasons, which are stated therein; but it seems as if they ought to be proved, in order that their force and cogency may be fully understood. Accordingly, I will run through them as briefly as possible.

The first one is the increase of the preaching and promulgation of the holy gospel. This was the principal object which the Catholic sovereigns of Castilla had in carrying on the discovery of the Western Indias, and in colonizing and supporting them – and, consequently, in doing the same for all the islands adjacent to them, among the number of which are the Philipinas; and although the richness of those provinces greatly aided their

² Thus in the original; but in the following expansion of these points eight of them are enumerated, indicating an oversight on the part of the compiler. The sixth is there stated as the renown and profit accruing to the crown from the victories gained by its Philippine subjects; the seventh, the aid given by them to both crowns; the eighth, their protection of Chinese commerce.

efforts, this was a secondary object with the sovereigns, and a fulfilment of what is promised in the gospel, that we must seek first the kingdom of God, and that all the rest which the world possesses and esteems shall be gathered and added to us. Therefore, since their intention was the conversion of all the infidels who inhabit that opposite hemisphere, He who became flesh in order to redeem them chose that this undertaking should gain, as a secondary result, the infinite riches which the Indias have given and are giving to España. Such a reason is not lacking in the Philipinas Islands. Their first discovery and settlement were solely for extending the Catholic faith; for then it was not known that those islands would be rich – as indeed they are not of themselves – nor that there could be any further result than the conversion of their natives to the gospel law, and the opening of a gate by which the preaching of the gospel could be carried to other provinces and kingdoms of Asia. That enterprise was prosecuted very successfully, as is publicly known; and it is now very evident that all those islands are today in the bosom of the Church – for they contain an archbishopric and three episcopal sees, and very many convents and hospitals; and there may be seen the Christian religion as pure, as valued, and as venerated as it is in España. And this rouses all the more admiration because the location of the colony is so remote, and so surrounded by heathens, Moors, and heretics; and that, in spite of all, the power and revenues of this crown are able to maintain it. But for this result, which was the main one, what was the second, and

in what was seen fulfilled the promise of the gospel? It was, that God has placed in those seas a firm column, on which He could found, and by which they could support themselves, Eastern India, the Molucas Islands, their commerce, and that of China; and which shall prove for the enemies of this crown – heretics, Moors, and heathens – a check upon their advance, a resistance to their intentions, and a strong rock on which they shall be broken, or at least their success may be checked and their machinations prevented. Such are the Philipinas Islands, and this rank they acquired after the preaching of the gospel entered them; and it seems as if it were a providence of Heaven to make them so necessary from the human standpoint, in order that the divine influences might not be lacking in them. For if sometimes the attainment of the first result might not be sufficient for maintaining them (which the piety of the kings of Castilla renders incredible), that of the second result would suffice, because even the divine needs to be maintained in the world by human protection. This is an axiom which, in lands newly converted, is generally accepted in the Indias; and it has been thoroughly proved by experience that the gospel is more effective among the barbarians when it is under the royal banners and standards than when it goes without them. Accordingly, it pleased God to ordain that these standards should be necessary in the Philipinas, in order that the preaching of the gospel, which was the motive for their going thither, might be established in their shelter. It is therefore established by a well-grounded

proposition that, even if no more is looked for than this aim of converting the heathen, it is now impossible to give up the preservation of the Philipinas, as being so important a part of the Catholic church. And if the kings of Castilla, in order not to permit liberty of conscience in Flandes, have during more than seventy years maintained in those states (and, through them, in all Europa) the most tedious and costly war that any monarchy in the world has waged: how can it be denied that by abandoning so vast a number of Catholics as there are in those islands, who have been instructed by the Christian zeal of Spaniards, there will, if we leave them now, be introduced among them liberty of conscience? not to mention a mingling of schismatic heretics, Moors, Jews, and heathens of various sects, as is seen in Bantan (which is the Oriental Ginebra [i. e., Geneva]), and in all other places where the Dutch find entrance; and they would soon enter those islands [if we abandon them]. Even if they caused great expenses to this crown (which they do not), they ought to be supported and preserved.

The second reason is, that in these islands are involved the authority, grandeur, and reputation of this crown. [My statement in regard to] the authority is proved by various methods, which may be found in the memorial that I have cited – of which I will only notice here the power which is exercised by the governor who rules the islands in the name of his Majesty. So great is this that it may be affirmed with truth that in all his kingdoms and seigniories (although the viceroyalties are classed as superior

to that government) the king does not appoint to an office of greater authority. If this is not evident, let it be noticed how many crowned kings render homage to that governor, and recognize him as their superior; how they respect him and fear his arms; how they desire his friendship, and, if they violate it, receive punishment. The king of Ternate died a prisoner in Manila; and he of Sian made, by force of arms, satisfaction for a reprisal which he had committed. Those of Siao and Tidore are our subjects, and that of Camboxa is our ally. The ruler of Great China is our friend, and the emperor of Japòn was such until the Dutch alienated him; and although the failure of the Japanese trade causes us loss, we have not feared to declare that ruler our enemy – as are those of Champa, Sian, and Mindanao; and, more than all, the Dutch, who keep those seas so infested. And it ought to be considered that the governor of Philipinas sends ambassadors to all those kings, with gifts to present to them, and receives those that they send to him in return; he makes peace and declares war, and does whatever seems to him expedient; and all this on his own responsibility, without waiting for a decision of the matter from España, because the excessive distance renders him the entire master in these acts. This is a preëminence of so great authority that no governor or viceroy in Europe exercises it. The grandeur which this monarchy preserves in those islands is widely known. In its material aspect, that domain extends through a circuit of 1,400 leguas, in which are included the two archipelagos of San Lazaro and Moluco: the

latter composed of five especially important islands, which their own kings govern, with more than seventy others adjacent; the latter, of those which are properly called Philipinas, forty in number – some of them larger than all España, some as large as this country, and others somewhat smaller. This does not mention the islands that are small and uninhabited, which are without number. Among all these is [foremost] the island of Luzon, in which is the distinguished and ever loyal city of Manila, which is the precious stone of this setting, and which alone is enough to prove the grandeur of España – by its location, its splendor, its buildings, its sky, and its soil. In its citizens are resplendent the religious faith, the loyalty, and the courage which gave origin to that colony. Since Manila is, as some say, the antipodes of Sevilla, it seems as if it tried to imitate that city in its characteristics, and in being a military center and an emporium of commerce for that hemisphere. If one considers higher things, the power of the islands cannot be reduced to the region just mentioned. Manila may be compared to the city of Goa, the capital of Eastern India; and it is she who reduces to subjection all the coasts from the Straits of Sincapura to Japòn, and the islands of the Ladrones and the Papuas; for her fleets sail through all those seas with the never conquered and always victorious royal standards of España. Her ships are admitted into many maritime kingdoms of Asia, and into numberless islands adjacent to them; they make voyages so long that no others equal to these are known. They go to China and Japòn, and by the

Southern Sea to Nueva España; and by way of the Northern Sea – coasting all the Oriental kingdoms, emerging [from the China Sea] through Sincapura, and doubling the great Stormy Cape, that of Buena Esperanza – they have reached the bar of San Lucar, with these two voyages making almost the entire circuit of the world. And if commerce is regarded as the greatest splendor of kingdoms (as it certainly is), this greatness is not lacking to the Philipinas; for they have so rich a commerce that, if they could enjoy it free, there is no city known to the world that would surpass, or even equal, Manila. That in that colony resides and is preserved the reputation of this crown, is evident, if it be noted that the maintenance of that reputation by the arms of España in Fuente-Rabia, in Salsas, in Italia, in Flandes, in Alemania, and in other parts of Europa is not to be wondered at; for if España is the heart which inspires strength in the mystical body of this monarchy, it is not much that the members which are nearest and so closely connected should share most effectively in this influx of energy. And if his Majesty (whom God preserve!) is the soul or vital breath of this heart, it cannot be denied that the closer proximity will cause the greater effect. Besides, the great number of the troops who go out from the adjoining [European] states prevents the enemy from seizing any one of those states; but the greatest cause of reputation for this crown is that, at a distance of three thousand leguas from the royal person and España, three thousand three hundred and thirty-six Spaniards, all of them occupied in those islands in war and in peace, on

sea and on land, [accomplish what they do]. It is the citizens of Manila who are the substance of that diamond, where the adjoining states are all enemies – barbarians, heretics, Moors, and heathens. Those Spaniards are without hope of succor in emergencies, without safety for the unfortunate in the retreat, and even without the reward due them for their achievements; they are always inferior in numbers, and continually attacked by Dutch, Mindanaos, Japanese, Jaos, and other peoples. They are always in anxiety about the Chinese, or Sangleys, who number more than 30,000 in Manila; and about the natives, of whom there are more than 80,000. In that land of many islands they maintain fortified posts, and on the sea armed fleets of galleons, galleys, and champans – one for the defense of Manila, another for conveying troops and supplies to Terrenate, and another for the fort on the island of Hermosa. In this last island and in those of Moluco, our military posts confront the Dutch; our people are continually fighting on sea and on land, while they wage on the frontier a fierce war with the most wary people that is known, and with tribes who are as cruel as they can be. Yet, although their soldiers are so few, they meet innumerable obligations, acquit themselves of all, and cause the Spanish name to emerge from all gloriously, and the standards of the king our lord victoriously. Therefore, it is the Philipinas Islands that preserve the reputation of this crown with the most valor and the least reward, with the greatest hazard, and with most glory.

The third fundamental reason is, that the Philipinas defend

the islands of Moluco, and the commerce in the cloves that are obtained from them. The importance of these islands is everywhere known, because in all the world there are no other islands nor any other region in which grows this spice or drug, so highly valued. For their discovery alone Hernando de Magallanes made, by order of the emperor Carlos Fifth, that celebrated voyage in which he found the strait to which he gave his name, and passed through it into the Southern Sea; and, although he was slain while making his claims, his ship sailed around the world. The lordship of those islands caused troublesome hostilities between the Castilians and Portuguese, which were ended by this crown giving them to that of Portugal, in fulfilment of a contract; for it seemed (and indeed was evident) that Castilla would have much difficulty in maintaining them when they were so separated from all its kingdoms and states, while Portugal, by possessing Eastern India, was less distant from and could better support them. The course of time showed that even India was very remote from them; for when the Dutch power entered the Orient and established a military post in Bantan³— a port nearer to Moluco, and more advantageously located than was India — it was so obviously impossible to defend them that in

³ According to Crawford (Dict. Ind. Islands, p. 38) this is the form, in the native languages, of the name that Europeans write Bantam, applied to the extreme western province of Java, and to an important seaport town in its northwest extremity. Most of the inhabitants of this province are Sundas, but along the coasts there is considerable intermixture with Javanese and other Malayan peoples. The port of Bantan was an important commercial center long before the arrival there of Europeans.

the end they were lost to us, the enemy getting possession of them all and of their commerce. But as the Philipinas were by that time quite populous, and so near to the Molucas that they were superior to Bantan [as a trading post], the task of restoring the Molucas [to Spanish control] was laid upon the governor, Don Diego de Acuña – who with his courage and energy, and the convenience of being so near, regained them and restored them to this crown. When both Castilla and Portugal recognized the great expense that India would have to incur in maintaining the Molucas, and that even with excessive expenditures it would be impossible to do so, on account of the injury being nearer than the remedy, and the enemy than the succor, those islands were, by the mutual agreement of the two crowns, united to the government of the Philipinas as regards their defense and support. The clove-trade was left to the Portuguese, because it was so important that, if it were taken from them, India would perish, or become greatly weakened. It is thus sufficiently proved that the Philipinas contributed to the restoration of all the forts in the Orient; and that in their preservation was and still is involved that of the Molucas, and consequently of all India. Thus they have been maintained since the year 1603, defending them by force of arms against the Dutch, who never cease their endeavors to expel the Castilians from those islands; this has been the cause of many naval encounters and battles, in which the arms of España have always remained victorious. Nevertheless, since the military force of Philipinas is small, the territory that they

must defend large, and the aid which is given to them for this purpose very limited, it has not been possible to prevent the treachery and persistence of the Dutch from having some effect; nor to put a stop to their sharing in the clove trade at some forts which they keep in the Molucas, though at the cost of many men, armed vessels, and expenses. From all of these islands are produced each year 2,816,000 libras of cloves, of which the Dutch secure 1,098,000 libras, and the Portuguese and Castilians 1,718,000 – and this latter supply is due to the protection of the Philipinas; while it is computed that the cloves which the Dutch carry away amount to three times as much as it will cost them to be absolute lords of the Molucas, even with the large garrisons and armed fleets which they keep and maintain for purchasing the spice and transporting it to Bantan. From this it obviously follows that without the Philipinas the Molucas would be lost, and their commerce and trade in cloves would cease – from which would follow two pernicious results, which would cause the loss of whatever his Majesty possesses in the Orient. One is, that India would be greatly weakened, for lack of that commerce; for if that country languishes on account of not having all of that trade, it may well be understood that she will perish if it be taken from her. The other is, that the Dutch in that case would have the entire benefit of the trade, and without much expense; for if [Holanda] with less than half the trade – and that at the cost of so many garrisons and fleets – gains such profits that they are enough to maintain whatever she has in India; if she

were to secure all the cloves and, on account of the less cost, thus gain a profit of more than a thousand per cent upon her investments, while the gross amount would be doubled: it is very plain that India would not remain safe, the Western Indias would be more effectively harassed, the rebel states in Flandes would be strengthened, the coasts of España would experience their invasions, and everywhere the treasure that could be obtained from the Molucas alone would cause most injurious effects – as may be seen, with more detailed arguments, in the memorial that I have cited in behalf of the Philipinas, to which [colony] we owe the only compensation [that we receive] for all these losses.

The fourth reason is almost the sequence of what has been said in the third, although it is more general, since it takes notice that the Dutch fleets have entered the Orient with so strong a force that they have often placed India in risk of being lost to us; for if they were aided by the Moorish and heathen kings and the rulers of Persa and Mogòr⁴– and sometimes the Dutch are leagued with the English, who also navigate those seas – their invasion would be irresistible. What has prevented this danger has been the diversion furnished by the Philipinas – not only by diminishing their trade and profits in Moluco (as has been seen), in China, and in other regions, but by compelling them to divide their forces, and to maintain in some places very large ones.

⁴ i. e., Hindostan (see VOL. XVII, p. 252). The grave accent is here used in the word Mogòr, simply as following the usage of the Extracto, which throughout prints the grave instead of the acute accent.

India is divided into two parts – [one], from the Cape of Buena Esperanza to the Straits of Sincapura; the other, from the straits to China and Japon. The first is defended by the Portuguese fleets of India, which seldom go thither through the straits; the second, by the Castilians of Philipinas, who never come here by way of the straits. For both these, it is necessary that the Dutch send thither and maintain squadrons; and therefore it is proved, at this very beginning, that if the fleets of this crown are deficient in either of those regions, and the enemy can transfer all of his naval force to the one that remains [without defense] because there is no diversion [of his forces] in the other, it will be difficult if not impossible to defend [the one to which he goes] – an argument which admits no debate in the naval as well as in the military world. From this it follows that if now the Philipinas fail us Eastern India will remain without aid, and consequently in evident danger of being lost [to us]. This is further confirmed by the fact that, of the two parts into which India is divided, the enemy expends much more of his energy in the second than in the first. In the latter he is content with factories and barter, without keeping any fortified posts; in the former, he maintains the forts of Malayo, Toloco, Tacubo, Malaca, Tacome, Marieco, Motir, Nofagia, Tafacen, Tabelole, Bermevelt, Tabori, Gilolo, Amboino, Lagu, Maruco, Mozovia, Belgio, Bantan, and Hermosa Island. In these nineteen presidios there were, in the year 1616, 3,000 soldiers; 193 pieces of bronze artillery and 310 of iron, and 300 stone-mortars [pedreros]; and thirty war

galleons. And all this is solely to defend themselves from the Philipinas, and to attack the islands so that the armed fleets of India shall not sail to that region – or, if they should go thither, it would be easy to stop them at the Strait of Sincapura. If then, the Philipinas were unable to act, and the Dutch should abandon those nineteen forts (which now are many more), as being no longer necessary to them, they would proceed to the coasts of India, and their galleons to those seas. If even when their energies are diverted, their forces divided, and their gains diminished as they are now, they cause so much anxiety, what would it be if, with little if any opposition, their forces united, and their profits increased, they should harass India? It is easy to see that they would occasion that region the utmost distress, and that consequently the Philipinas are an absolutely necessary defense for it.

The fifth reason has the same ground as the fourth; for, on account of the diversion of forces and the expense which the enemy now encounters in the Orient and in the forts of Moluco, he is compelled to refrain from annoying the Western Indias, and must devote less attention, military force, and money to that object. And since what he spends or fails to gain in India enables the Philipinas to oppose or to embarrass him, it follows that if he there shall gain more and spend less, he will here take possession of both [the Indias]. And if the Indias, even with so effective a diversion [of the enemy's force as they have now], need the Windward Fleet which is being built there, and for

which a subsidy of 600,000 ducados is granted annually: in order to dispense with the garrisons, fleets, and expenditures in India everything would have to be increased, so that in the Indias more expense would be incurred for their defense than is consumed in the Philipinas.

The sixth is a reason of honor and profit, for these two admirable results follow from the victories which the inhabitants of Philipinas have gained over the Dutch: honor, on account of the glory which the Catholic arms acquire in those seas, which gains for them the esteem of the Japanese, Chinese, Sianese, Mindanaos, and innumerable other peoples, who serve as spectators in the theatre for such exploits; and profit, since, if the enemy's forces are weakened it follows that, besides those that he loses in being conquered, he is compelled to expend still greater ones in order to keep his foothold. This is the most notable reason for maintaining powerful squadrons on the sea, in order that if the pirate undertakes to plunder successfully, he will have to do it with so great a force that either he will abandon the prize because he cannot hold it, or he will let it alone because the profits do not make it worth his while. Of the victories which the Spaniards have gained in those seas there are extant histories and accounts; and in the large memorial some of these are mentioned.

The seventh is, that [by the islands] are aided the two crowns of Castilla and Portugal, who are so united and in so fraternal relations in the Orient, each possessing its share of the two parts into which that region is, as we have said, divided. If we

are to base our opinion on experience, the facts are evident in the restoration of Moluco; for in the time of Governor Don Juan de Sylva the forces of both crowns were joined, and it is regarded as certain that, if death had not intercepted his designs, he would have driven from those seas the arms of Holanda and of Inglaterra, and awakened fear and dread in many kings who were awaiting the result of so powerful a combination; and, even though success is not always so immediate, it suffices that it should be possible to make the enemy fear, and to lead them to believe that what has occurred sometimes may occur often.

The eighth reason is to protect and preserve the commerce of China for both crowns. For this argument it is taken for granted that this commerce is one of the most beneficial and lucrative of those in the entire Orient; and we can say that there is no other in all the world that equals it. The Oriental traffic of ancient times, which the Romans so highly valued, originated in China and in the drugs, fabrics, and curiosities of that country – although, as they were ignorant of its real origin, they called it the India trade, since they received it from that country. In the larger memorial I have already discoursed upon this at length. Now all the nations in those [Oriental] kingdoms take part in this commerce, but it is conducted most extensively and steadily by the Portuguese of India and the Castilians of Manila; we shall soon relate how important it is to the latter. Of the Portuguese it suffices to say that they possess in China the city of Macan, and the privilege of entering that of Canton; and the commerce of these two cities

they maintain through the Strait of Sincapura, though always in danger from the Dutch. But as the profits are so great, they sail by that route; it adds much to their safety that they cross through the seas of Philipinas, and that Macan can find succor in Manila. But if this should be lacking, Macan could not remain many years without ruin, nor could India enjoy the commerce with China, which is one of those which most benefit her; and if the Chinese trade is cut off from India and Manila, the Dutch alone will be strong enough to carry it on. Although they are at present shut out from it by the robberies that they have committed on the Sangleys, they would not find it difficult to bring the latter to friendship with them; for it is already known that when money is lacking in Philipinas the Sangleys carry their merchandise to the Dutch. Therefore, on the preservation of those islands depends that of the Chinese trade.

These eight fundamental reasons are sufficient to prove the importance and necessity that exist for maintaining, preserving, and favoring those islands; for if they were lost the resulting damage would be great and excessive beyond any possible comparison or proportion to what the islands now cost us. And because there is seen in this an error of misapprehension, I will make a statement regarding it that is worthy of much attention and notice. This is, that it costs the royal exchequer more to support the island of San Martin⁵— which is of no use, and has

⁵ St. Martin, one of the Antilles, was a resort for French pirates and Dutch smugglers until 1638, when it was captured by the Spaniards. It was afterward recovered from

no more effect than to remove an obstacle to the navigation of the Indias, and take away a landing-place from the pirates (who already have numberless others) – than to maintain the Philipinas Islands, which have the utility and effectiveness which I have stated.

For the proof of this, I avail myself of a summary of the detailed statements in the larger memorial, regarding the cost of the Philipinas. For the officials of justice, who govern them, 37,077 pesos; for the entire ecclesiastical estate, 37,277 pesos. In maintaining friendly relations with neighboring kings, 1,500 pesos. In the administration of the royal exchequer, 11,550 pesos. For the land forces at Manila, and in the military posts of all the islands, 229,696 pesos. For wars on land, and the forts in Moluco, 97,128 pesos. For naval war, shipbuilding, and navy-yards, 283,184 pesos. For supplies and provisions for all the soldiers and seamen, 153,302 pesos. These sums amount to 850,734 pesos, which is the expenditure made each year for the islands – not omitting to reckon wages and salaries, scanty though they be. This, therefore, is all the charge for their cost which can be made.

On the credit side of the account, the tributes from the crown encomiendas are worth each year 53,715 pesos; and the two reals which are paid to the king by each Indian in the private encomiendas amount to 21,107 pesos. The licenses which are

them, and in 1648 was formally divided between the French and Dutch – a status that still prevails.

given to the Sangleyes come to 112,000 pesos; and the tributes from these Sangleyes, to 8,250. The fifth and the tenth of gold, 750 pesos. The ecclesiastical tithes, which are collected by the royal exchequer for the support of the prelates and clergy, 2,750 pesos. The freight charges in his Majesty's ships, 350 pesos. The court fines, 1,000 pesos. The customs duties, 38,000 pesos. The mesada and half-annats, 6,000. From these ten sources the income amounts to 243,922 pesos; to this must be added the imposts, freight dues, and customs duties which are collected in Nueva España on the merchandise that comes from the islands – all which amount to 300,000 pesos, and this is income that results and proceeds from the islands; accordingly, by a decree of February 19, 1606, it is commanded that these charges, adding to their amount each year, be remitted to Manila, and that so much less be sent from the royal exchequer of Mexico. And if all these goods are sold and traded in Nueva España once, or two or more times, and pay the customary charges of alcabala,⁶ if the rate of two [per cent] which they usually pay was moderated to 30,000 pesos in the larger memorial, the rate on the said [sales] will certainly amount to 60,000 pesos. With this, the islands

⁶ The alcabala, an excise duty collected on all sales of commodities, was derived from the Moors, and was more or less imposed in Spain from the year 1342 on. It was introduced in the American colonies in 1574, and for more than two centuries was a rich source of income for the Spanish crown and a heavy tax on the colonists. The rate was at first two per cent, but afterward this was doubled and trebled; and it was levied on every transfer of goods, taxing property over and over again. See Bancroft's Mexico, iii, pp. 658, 659; and Recopilación leyes de Indias, lib. viii, tit. xiii, and lib. ix, tit. xlv, ley lxvi.

now have 593,922 pesos to their credit; so that their [actual] expense cannot be estimated at more than 256,812 pesos – [and that] without counting the proceeds of the Crusade, those from intestate property, or the monopoly of playing-cards.

Another item ought to be placed with these, which is the expense for the islands of Moluco. These were possessions of the crown of Portugal, which consumed in supporting and defending them great sums of ducados and many soldiers; but finally it lost them, and the Dutch gained them. By agreement of the two crowns, Governor Don Pedro de Acuña regained possession of them (as I have related); and as it was evident that the crown of Portugal could not defend them on account of the great expense required therefor, those islands were committed, in the year 1607, to the governor of Philipinas. In this must be considered several things. First, that these islands of Moluco do not belong to those which are called Philipinas, nor are they included in that group. Second, that at present they are the property of the Portuguese crown, but are in possession of the Castilian crown for the purpose of protecting, maintaining, and defending them; on this account, the commerce in cloves is left to India, as it was before. Third, that the Philipinas and the citizens of Manila do not obtain or possess any advantage or benefit from Moluco, or anything else besides the continual trouble of succoring and provisioning its forts; for the clove-trade belongs to the Portuguese, and there is no other commerce in those islands. Fourth, that since the day when the governor of Philipinas and the

crown of Castile took charge of Moluco, the crown of Portugal has saved more than 400,000 pesos, the cost which it would have incurred in maintaining Moluco, estimated on the basis of what it now costs Castilla for that – although Manila, which is the place where provision is made for those islands, is so near them. Fifth, that for these reasons it is evident and plain that what is spent for the islands of Moluco should not be charged to the Philipinas; nor even should the crown of Castilla pay it, but rather that of Portugal, which is the proprietary owner of Moluco, and has the benefit of the clove-trade. Consequently, whatever is received from that trade must be placed to the credit and acquittance of the Philipinas, against the amount charged to them. Sixth, and last, notice the [items of] the annual expenses of the Moluco Islands: for salaries, 97,128 pesos; provisions, considering the total number of people, will average 30,000 pesos a year; for the ecclesiastical ministrations and the management of the royal treasury, the expense will reach 4,000 pesos; and for naval affairs and shipyards, 100,000 pesos – since in order to send every year the usual supplies, and to furnish extraordinary aid when occasion demands, the armed ships are necessary which are always kept at Manila. Thus the cost of the islands of Moluco comes to more than 230,000 pesos each year; deducting this from the 256,000 which remain charged to the Philipinas, only 26,000 pesos. This is an amount unworthy of consideration, even if the islands were of no more use than to augment the grandeur of this crown; but granting that they possess the advantages that

I have mentioned, the loss, cost, and expense is nothing; and it remains abundantly proved how necessary, just, expedient, and requisite it is to maintain them.

If the Philipinas are to be maintained, it now remains to ascertain how and in what manner this shall be done, in order to secure their preservation, and [at the same time] to avoid any considerable injury to the royal exchequer and to the other kingdoms of this crown. For this there are but two methods, and these alone; no other can be found which is adequate and efficacious. The first one is, the method which is adopted for the island of San Martin, and for all the military posts which his Majesty maintains in the Indias and in other regions, and for his fleets and armies; this is, to furnish from the royal treasury all that shall be necessary for this purpose. Granting that the islands cost annually 850,000 pesos and furnish revenues of 244,000 pesos, his Majesty will have to supply 606,000 pesos. Although this is a great sum of money, the preservation of those islands is so desirable, and so much more will have to be lost and spent if the islands are lost, that, in case there shall be no other way, it will be necessary and compulsory to accept and carry out the above method – although even that would not be enough, for the islands now cost 850,000 pesos [only] because the citizens of Manila give much aid, and render service with their persons and property. In one year they have thus given more than 200,000 pesos, as is made evident in the larger memorial, nos. 59 and 60. Accordingly, this method is exceedingly costly, and even more

so than it would seem, for the reason that I have stated.

There remains, then, the second method, the only one [available]; this consists in granting commerce to those islands, which would suffice to secure three results. The first of these is, to preserve the present revenue of 244,000 pesos that they yield; for that sum, or the greater part of it, is based on the wealth which the islands obtain from their commerce, and if this fails them they will produce much less, and therefore much more will have to be supplied [from without]. The second, to give the royal treasury the benefit of the 606,000 pesos which (or the greater part of that sum) are deficient for the usual expense account, as has been shown. The third, to furnish the citizens with means by which they can, in emergencies, aid the extraordinary expenses – as they always have done, and still do – by having a commerce to support them; but without this it will be necessary, as they would lack the means to render such aid, that the king should bear these expenses. These three results being granted, the preservation of those islands readily follows.

The question then remains as to the character, amount, and form of this commerce, which are three principal topics. As for the character of this commerce, it is noted in the larger memorial (no. 15) that the islands have a domestic and a foreign commerce. It has been shown that this is scanty, except what proceeds from Moluco; but that this might be very rich, since it is the trade in cloves (as may be seen in nos. 28, 30, 34, and 36 of the said memorial). But, as this trade is reserved for

the Portuguese and prohibited to the Castilians, it is useless to consider it for this purpose – although it is worth notice that whatever advantage the crown of Portugal derives from that trade is due to the Philipinas, and results from their preservation. I shall soon make some observations on the remaining portion of this domestic commerce, and what can be obtained from it.

Their foreign commerce is with many regions of the Orient, as is stated in the said memorial, from no. 20 on; and in no. 37 it is shown that only the inhabitants of the Philipinas can carry on the commerce with China, because they have means for this only – exporting that merchandise to Nueva España, and obtaining the returns from it in silver, with which to maintain it; for they have no other commodity which the Chinese crave, as is proved in the said memorial, no. 70. From this the conclusion is drawn that the islands cannot be preserved without commerce, and that this must necessarily be conducted with Nueva España in Chinese merchandise, and in some of their own products.

As for the second point, the amount of the commerce, this was formerly without any limitation; and during the time (which was short) while that condition lasted the islands acquired what strength and wealth and grandeur they now possess. After a time certain difficulties arose – which are discussed in the said memorial, nos. 80, 81, 94, 117, and 118 – all being to the prejudice of España's commerce; on account of these it became expedient to limit the commerce of the islands, reducing it to a fixed amount of 250,000 pesos' worth of merchandise and

500,000 pesos in returns. Although the citizens resented this, and saw that if it were successful they could [only] preserve their wealth without being able to increase it much, they went on under this decree from the time when it began to be executed (in 1605) until 1635 – when Don Pedro de Quiroga went [to Mexico], and by his rigorous measures reduced this permission to terms so restricted that it was rather taking away the permission entirely than carrying out its intent. This falling upon the necessity of the islands that the stated amount of their merchandise be increased, on account of the many shipwrecks, misfortunes, and expenses which they had experienced – of which I have made a brief relation in the said memorial, no. 107 – to take away the permission that they had without granting them a more liberal one, was more than they could endure; it may readily be seen what results this would cause. And as divine Providence did not cause these troubles to cease with the death of him who caused them, it may well be believed that the islands are today in so miserable a condition that they will either be ruined or can no longer be reached by the remedy which the kind attention of the council has begun to furnish them – entrusting its final application to the inquiry to be made by your illustrious Lordship, who is well informed of the losses, advantages and disadvantages, and all the circumstances of which knowledge is necessary for your decision in a matter so serious as this, on which depends the preservation of the Philipinas and of all that depends upon them. Their citizens hope that your decision will be what is

expedient and necessary for those vassals, always so loyal, but always harassed by enemies, and even by friends.

There remains, then, the third point of the three that I have stated; that is, the form which must be adopted and followed in this commerce of the islands with Nueva España. Don Pedro de Quiroga proceeded in this matter with measures so rigorous and unusual that he tried to establish regulations different from those which are respected and observed in all the ports of España, of the Indias, and of the world. He undertook to open and weigh the bundles and chests, and to count, weigh, and measure the commodities and wares, without any preceding denunciation, information, or [even] indication that these exceeded the registration. He laid an embargo on all, without there being any guilt on the part of the owners, or prohibition of the articles; and for only raising this so unjust embargo he extorted from the commerce 300,000 pesos – excluding from composition 600,000 pesos' worth besides, which are included in the [right of] composition by express, clear, and plain provisos [of the ordinances]. He collected the dues on whatever appraisement of the goods it suited him to make, although it was evident to him that they were being sold at half that rate in Acapulco, and even in Mexico. He hindered the return of the proceeds from the merchandise, which is allowed by the royal decree; and it cannot be denied that he who carries his goods to sell, [even though] with permission, may not exact the price that he shall obtain for them. For granting that permission,

he demanded new dues and imposed new burdens; compelled the shippers to do whatever he wished, and harassed the mariners on that trade-route until he made them leave it – when it is known (and the islands are making representations to that effect) that it is for what is most needed in those islands that the governors in Manila make concessions to their citizens when the latter ask for these, in order to constrain them by kindness to what could not be obtained by severity; and the Council is conferring upon those citizens privileges and distinctions, in order that many may be encouraged to become mariners and artillerists. All this was done by Don Pedro de Quiroga under pretext of serving his Majesty; but it caused his royal exchequer the great loss which has been experienced in the failure, for two years, of ships to arrive from Philipinas. By this has been lost, in dues alone, 660,000 pesos, and as much more through the suspension of commerce; and still greater were the losses to the vassals of his Majesty, to say nothing of the danger in which those islands were left, and to which they are still exposed. To speak of the plan which should be established in this commerce, it seems as if it were sufficient to place before your illustrious Lordship what Don Pedro de Quiroga did, and what resulted from that, in order to understand that if by his proceedings he destroyed and ruined the commerce it is not expedient to follow his example. Rather should be followed those of Sevilla, Cartagena, Portovelo, Vera Cruz, and the other ports of the Indias and of these kingdoms, in which royal laws, decrees, and ordinances have ordained what

shall be observed in these matters; and since these regulations are not annulled or broken in favor of the islands, it will not be just if they are broken or annulled to the loss or injury of that colony. For neither do those vassals merit less than this, nor is their commerce of different character from the other commerce that belongs to this crown.

Although representations have been made, with more exaggeration and less in accordance [with the facts] than would be desirable, of serious infractions of law that have been committed in this commerce – which representations I have answered at length and in detail in the said memorial, from no. 94 to no. 99 – it may be observed that, if there are any (which, if I do not admit, I do not deny), they are not of greater extent nor of different character than those which are every year experienced in the fleets and galleons on the India trade-route. These infractions consist in shipping more merchandise than what is registered, and different commodities from what are declared, and in carrying back more silver than is shown by the registers; and there are not and cannot be on the ships of Philipinas other infractions than the shipment of more goods and the return of more silver than appear on the registers. Let, then, the remedy be ascertained which is applied at Sevilla, Cadiz, and San Lucar, at Cartagena, Portovelo, Vera Cruz, and Habana, and let the same be applied at Manila and Acapulco.⁷ Let guards

⁷ Raynal thus describes Acapulco, in his *History of Settlements and Trade in Indies* (Justamond's translation, London, 1783), iii, pp. 378, 379: "The port of Acapulco

be placed, and informers allowed, and goods declared – with rewards to encourage, and punishments to warn; but it would be a chance success to ascertain in detail what would be shipped at Sevilla and unloaded in the ports of the Indias. This would be to establish not order but disorder in that commerce, as I state in the said memorial, no. 95; and soon the same thing would be noticed in that of the islands.

And although it may be represented that the infractions in the

where the vessel arrives, hath two inlets, separated from each other by a small island: the entrance into them in the day is by means of a sea-breeze, and the sailing out in the night-time is effected by a land-breeze. It is defended only by a bad fort, fifty soldiers, forty-two pieces of cannon, and thirty-two of the corps of artillery. It is equally extensive, safe, and commodious. The bason which forms this beautiful harbor is surrounded by lofty mountains, which are so dry, that they are even destitute of water. Four hundred families of Chinese, Mulattoes, and Negroes, which compose three companies of militia, are the only persons accustomed to breathe the air of this place, which is burning, heavy, and unwholesome. The number of inhabitants in this feeble and miserable colony is considerably increased upon the arrival of the galleons, by the merchants from all the provinces of Mexico, who come to exchange their silver and their cochineal, for the spices, muslins, china, printed linens, silks, perfumes, and gold works of Asia. At this market, the fraud impudently begun in the Old World, is as impudently completed in the New. The statutes have limited the sale to 2,700,000 livres, and it exceeds 10,800,000 livres. All the money produced by these exchanges should give ten per cent. to the government: but they are deprived of three-fourths of the revenue which they ought to collect from their customs, by false entries.” This passage is appropriated bodily – with a few changes, and an important omission – in Malo de Luque’s *Establecimientos ultramarinos* (Madrid, 1790), v, p. 220; and no credit is given by him to Raynal. On the map of Acapulco in Bellin’s *Atlas maritime* (Paris, 1764), t. ii, p. 86, appears the following naïve item in the legend at the side: “Two trees, to which the galleon from Manila attaches a cable;” these trees are located directly in front of the tiny “city,” and between two redoubts.

Philipinas trade, considering their amount, cause more loss than those in the commerce of España, especially in the exportation of the silver – since that which is brought in the galleons outside of the kingdom finally comes to Castilla; and that which is carried in the ships of Philipinas soon finds its way to China, and thus is lost, and the commerce is taken away from the vassals of this crown – reply may thus be made. The illegal shipments on the Philipinas route cause much less loss than do those on the India route, as is incurred when a galleon laden with silver is lost at sea, as compared with one that is captured by enemies; in the former case there is only our own loss, but in the latter is the same loss, and an advantage to our enemies. It cannot be denied that the silver which goes unregistered in the ships of Philipinas is lost, but no enemy of this crown benefits thereby; for that silver comes to a halt in China, from which country it never emerges – as is stated in the said memorial, no. 72 – nor does it work any harm there, whether it be more or less; for neither do we wage war with China, nor do the Chinese aid any other nation which wages war with us. As for the silver which comes [to España] unregistered in the galleons, those who best understand the subject consider that it would cause less damage if it remained in the Indias (and even some extend this idea to its being lost in the sea); because, under the pretext of its coming concealed, it either does not come into Sevilla, or, if it does come in, soon goes out again. In both these cases, it remains in the hands of the French, English, Flemish, and Portuguese, and most of it is anchored in their ships, by

which Inglaterra, Francia, and Holanda are enriched; while that which goes to Portugal is carried to India, and there it is shared by the Dutch, Persians, Arabs, Mogous, and other hostile nations, until it reaches China, which is its center [of equilibrium]. It may be judged, then, which is the greater injury; and since the loss caused by the illegal shipments on the vessels of Philipinas is less, let that be done with those ships that is done with the galleons. But let it not be proposed that the commerce be taken from them, or its amount limited, or that unusual methods and severity be employed in dealing with them, since these are not used in the commerce of the Indias, and, comparing them together, one is no less necessary than the other.

From these considerations we draw the final conclusion that if the Philipinas Islands are, as has been proved, absolutely necessary to this crown on account of the eminent advantages and benefits which result to it from them, and that, in order to preserve them, there are but two methods: one, for his Majesty to support them; the other, to grant them commerce by which they can sustain themselves – the first costly and difficult, the second easy and obvious – the latter ought to be accepted and carried out. [This can be done] by giving them the commerce which they have hitherto enjoyed with Nueva España, to the amount that is expedient, and in the usual manner, without adding conditions that will diminish or render it difficult; for that will be to withdraw and consequently to destroy and end it, and with it those islands, which are so important to this Catholic

monarchy. Your illustrious Lordship will make such report on this point and argument as [his Majesty's] vassals there expect and desire from your great ability and zeal.

Point second

As for the permission [to trade] which the islands have enjoyed since 1604 – which is to the amount of 250,000 pesos that may be carried in merchandise, and 500,000 pesos which may be sent back in silver, on the two ships which are allotted for that trade – the islands have petitioned his Majesty that he would graciously increase the 250,000 pesos' worth of merchandise to 500,000, and the 500,000 pesos of silver to 800,000; this is referred to the inquiry of your illustrious Lordship. And although I have in the said memorial discussed the main arguments for this request, I will, since these are related to the entire subject of those islands, here reduce them to six or seven principles.

First: because, as I have stated and proved, this commerce began in the year 1565, and was carried on without any restriction of its amount until 1604, when it was limited to the amount above stated. The islands could endure this limitation because they then possessed three attributes which they now lack. The first was, that the citizens were rich and strong through having enjoyed free trade almost forty years; and therefore they possessed, and have had thus far, the means to bear expense and losses. But since, from their trade being reduced to so small an amount, it

resulted that their profits were diminished and their obligations increased; their fortunes have so steadily declined that, if the trade permitted to them is not increased, they cannot improve their fortunes, nor even preserve the remnants of these. The second was, that those islands had few enemies, and were less infested and harried by them [than now]; for until the year 1600 neither did the Dutch cause any anxiety in those seas, nor was there any other nation which visited them with hostile acts or fleets. Since that year the profits obtained from the cloves, the plunder of the ships from China, and friendly relations with the Japanese, have all been such inducements to the Dutch to frequent the seas in that region that they have kept the [Philipinas] Islands continually in arms, rendering them an active military frontier. Hardly a year has passed without a sea-fight; and, moreover, the Dutch have incited the Mindanaos, the Japanese, and other barbarians also to make war on us. The result has been that the citizens [of the islands] have spent their fortunes in serving his Majesty, which they have done with their property and persons – as is described in the said memorial, nos. 59 and 60. And as the profits from their commerce have become less, and the expenses for war greater and more continual, their poverty has become so great that they are in need of more favor than they have thus far enjoyed; for if (as has been proved) their commerce only is adequate to support those islands, and that which they have hitherto carried on is steadily declining, it must necessarily be increased, in order that they may not perish and be

destroyed. This is confirmed by the third of the circumstances mentioned above, the excessive and enormous losses of property which the citizens of Manila have suffered since the year 1575 – which are mentioned, in due order, in the said memorial, no. 107. Some of these misfortunes occurred before the year 1604, and, as until then the commerce was free, they had some reparation for their losses; but those which have occurred since then have had, on account of the limitation of trade, but little relief and scanty reparation. The result has been that, although the injurious effects and great loss have not been noticed every year, they are in the course of all those years so keenly felt that a special means of restoration is needed; and there can be no other save that of increasing their commerce, for their relief must come from the same quarter as that whence their losses came.

Second: [This relief should be given] because when the permit for 250,000 pesos was granted there were in Manila fewer citizens and soldiers; and now the number of these and the [size of the] city have increased, and more aid has become necessary, not only with the course of the thirty-six years which have elapsed, but because there is more war. It appears that those who are occupied in his Majesty's service on pay, including those who have been sent to the islands and those who are born there, number 3,338 Spaniards, and 2,540 Indians of various nationalities – not counting the citizens, or the traders, or other persons who are pursuing various crafts (as is stated in the said memorial, no. 55) – which is twice the number employed in

the year 1604. And as it is requisite that all participate in the commerce, and that – although it must be through the medium of the citizens, among whom the amount allowed is distributed – all persons may have some share in it, it becomes necessary, since there are twice as many people as there formerly were, that the amount of trade permitted should also be doubled; for if this be not done, and that which formerly belonged to few be shared among many, no one will have enough for his needs.

Third: this argument being sufficient for the increase and enlargement of the amount permitted, it is asserted that this amount is less than what was first granted; for, as concerns the distribution (which is made by toneladas), the governors have introduced the practice of giving these to hospitals and convents, and often to the mariners and artillerists, to those who go on expeditions and embassies, and to other persons. Thus is consumed a large part of this permitted amount, and consequently of the 500,000 pesos' worth of returns – from which are deducted the legacies, donations, contributions for charitable purposes, wages of the seamen and soldiers, wrought silver, and all the rest that is shipped (as is ordained by the decree of 1606, cited in the said memorial, no. 90), by which, it is at once evident, the amount granted by the permission is diminished to just that extent.

Fourth: even if it be granted that some illegalities have been committed in that trade, these must have been in exporting more merchandise and bringing back more silver than what the

permission decreed; and the cause must have been the pressing need of the inhabitants. For since their numbers are greater, and the amount of trade allowed them is less in quantity, and the share of each one is less because there are more persons concerned in it, the amount that some receive will be so little that it will compel them to infringe the permission, and to export or bring back more than is allotted to them, in order that they may be able to support themselves and meet their obligations. These illegal acts will cease when the amount permitted shall be increased and extended; for, as each person will have a share sufficient to employ his capital, he will not expose it to risk, or carry goods without registry. With this, not only will the inhabitants be enriched, but the illegalities will cease; and, as the royal dues will increase, his Majesty will not have to supply anything for the maintenance of the islands, but instead will be much profited by them.

Fifth: because the main reason for having limited this commerce was the injury which has resulted from it to Sevilla, not only with the merchandise which it carries to Nueva España, but with the silver which it drains thence – as has been noticed in the said memorial, nos. 71–79 and 116–119. And although this difficulty is there solved, and this concession is thus made easier – because when the cause ceases, the effect ceases also – another argument is here adduced; this is as follows. The [accusations of] illegal acts in that commerce which are made public are either true or false; if they are false, our object is attained. But, if they

are true and those things are done, how can it be said that, in place of the 250,000 pesos [allowed], four millions' worth of merchandise come to Nueva España; and that for the 500,000 pesos of returns they carry ten millions in silver? What difficulty is there in [allowing that for] the four millions that are shipped, a half-million should come under registry, and one out of the ten millions that are returned should go registered, and that on this million and a half the royal dues be collected, since actually more than 750,000 pesos are carried each way without paying these? And even if those illegal acts be checked, and it be granted that for the 250,000 pesos are shipped 500,000, and for the 500,000 pesos of returns a million be carried: if the excess [now] goes and comes without registry, how much more certain is it that the goods will be registered and the royal dues paid? But this argument is made even stronger by the great probability that the excess over the amounts allowed only extends or can extend to the investments of the shippers; and since these actually are only citizens of Philipinas, the citizens neither have four millions to export, nor can they get ten millions in returns; for in this way they would be, in four years, at the rate of six millions of profits a year, the wealthiest in the world, while they are at this time the poorest. And if that result is not evident, how can the cause [assigned] be regarded as infallible? Let us grant, then, that they will infringe the rule if besides the amount permitted as much more be carried; and even that is much. But if this permission were ample enough to include the funds of all those who lade

goods, it is evident that the infractions of law would cease, and that it would not be possible to have them, or means to commit them; and this becomes more credible, if the urgency with which this increase of the permission is requested be noted. And how is it to be supposed that those who are carrying their goods without registry (which is more profitable) prefer to carry them registered, except in order not to exceed the privilege that is given to them? And thus it is certain that if a more extensive permission be granted to them, there will not be illegal shipments, nor will the injury [to Spanish trade] be greater, nor as much as is now assumed.

The sixth and last argument is reduced to what was proved in the said memorial, nos. 101–106: that the profits of this commerce, on account of the many burdens imposed upon it, are more limited than has been understood; and that in order for the exporters to make any gain, they need more liberal concessions. For [even] if the gain be thirty to forty per cent, it is consumed in costs and management, if the amount laden be small; and the increase of the principal must incur almost the same costs, for they will only be greater in [paying] the duties. The exporters demand with justice that they be authorized to ship twice as much merchandise, since the benefit that they will experience is evident, and no injury will result, as has been proved.

I observe that it would seem a very proper measure to place a limit to the permission only on the returns in silver, and that the shipment of merchandise be free, under the direction of

the governor. One reason is, that by this means the amount of merchandise would remain limited; since it is plain that the citizens will not leave their funds in Nueva España, and that therefore they will not carry back more than they are entitled to in the returns [for their goods]. The other, because in this no innovation arises, but it accords with the usage which has hitherto prevailed, the lading being regulated more by the burden of the ships, their capacity in toneladas, and the bulk of the commodities, than by its actual and intrinsic value; and giving opportunity for the registration of the products of the country itself, even outside of the permission, as will soon be discussed. And if no difficulty has been found in this practice, and if the governors and the viceroys have overlooked this, and if Don Pedro de Quiroga, with all his severity, never paid any attention to the merchandise being in excess of the 250,000 pesos that were allowed, unless the goods were shipped unregistered, or incorrectly appraised: it is not a new or injurious arrangement that such a method be continued, and that the limitation of the amount allowed be imposed only on the silver that is carried as returns.

Point third

In case the amount permitted to the islands is increased to 500,000 pesos, or the limitation be placed only on the returns in silver (as is asked and argued in the second question), the

declaration of this third topic is not necessary; but if the permission is not enlarged to that extent, and the quantity of merchandise is limited, the petition which the city of Manila has made finds place. In regard to that, moreover, your illustrious Lordship must be informed that the city declares that the commodities which are peculiar to those islands ought not to be included in the amount permitted, but that these should be registered outside of that amount – which should be and is understood to apply to the merchandise from China, and to no other.

Suppose, then, that besides the commodities of China, there are sent in the ships of this commerce some which are produced and manufactured in the Philipinas Islands themselves, and are gathered by their natives and inhabitants – such as wax, white and yellow; talingas,⁸ table-covers, and lampotes⁹ (which are pieces of cotton canvas); blankets from Ilocos, Moro, and Bombòn; and some civet. Of these products a hundred toneladas are usually shipped, for, as they are bulky, they occupy more space than they are worth; but it is actually worthwhile for the citizens to ship these to Nueva España, even though it be to sell them at no more than their cost, because they have no other market for

⁸ Talinga is defined by Noceda and Sanlucar (Vocab. lengua Tagala, third ed., Manila, 1860) as manta de Ilocos (“Ilocos blanket”). It is apparently the same as terlinga, used by Mallat and Malo de Luque; and tarlinga, later in this document.

⁹ Encarnación (Dicc. Bisaya-Español, Manila, 1885) says, after defining the word as here: “The word lompot eminently signifies ‘piece;’ and the pieces in which the native women weave all their fabrics are regularly eight varas long and one wide.”

these goods.

The usage which has hitherto been followed in regard to these goods is to ship them registered, and value them, and pay the royal dues, like the rest, without paying any attention to their being included or not in the 250,000 pesos of the amount permitted, although the returns for them have always been included in the 500,000 pesos of money; and in some years when the citizens have not had the cloth from China to fill up the amount of 250,000 pesos, they have done so with these goods – not because they supposed that such shipments were prohibited in other circumstances, but to supply the deficiency with such goods as they could send.

They ask, then, that to avoid uncertainties declaration be made that these goods, when satisfactory proof is given that they are the products of the islands, may be carried to Nueva España without limitation of their quantity, or obligation to include them in the amount permitted. This [request] is based on the fact that the prohibition was expressly imposed for the merchandise of China, which on account of being silk goods injured [the sale of] those which are shipped from España. This is gathered from all the decrees that have been issued in regard to this matter – all of which distinctly state the cloth of China as being the goods which damage [the Spanish commerce] – not that of the islands, which is not of that character.

Another reason is, that no province has ever been forbidden to export to others its own products, for this would be to close to

them the intercourse with others which is their right by natural law; and even if its commerce be limited to certain provinces it ought not to be deprived of trade with all the others, but the exportation which it finds least inconvenient should be left to it. From Philipinas the commodities which those islands produce cannot be carried to other parts of the Orient, which have abundance of the same, and even better. As the only consumption of these goods is in the Indias, the citizens had begun to send them to Perù, Tierra Firme, Goathemala, and Nueva España; but of these four trade-routes three are prohibited, because with these goods are shipped those from China, so only the trade with Nueva España remains to them. It immediately follows that for this latter trade the transportation of goods must be free.

Another reason: because there is not a province in this [kingdom] which has not tacit or express permission to export its products to any place where these may have value and be sold, and with their proceeds are sent in return other products which are lacking in that land; for if they could not do this they would be shut in, and not having communication with adjoining lands, the result would be that both would perish, or would come to such poverty that they could not support themselves.

Another reason: because – as is proved in the said memorial, nos. 115, 116, and 117 – these commodities from the islands do not interfere with those that are shipped from España, because they are so different in quality. If the people have the former, they consume them; if not, they cannot supply the lack with the goods

from these kingdoms, for these are of much value, and those from the islands are worth but little. Nor does it follow that the poor Indian or negro who buys a vara of canvas from the islands for a real and a half will, if he cannot obtain it, buy the same goods from Ruan for six or eight reals; since it is more probable that he will dispense with the goods, even if he go without a shirt, than possible that he can buy it when he has not enough money to pay for it.

Another reason: because permission is not asked to carry back the returns for these goods in silver, since their proceeds, as being of small value, will be part of the returns allowed for the merchandise of China; and because, in case there is not room for these proceeds, the inhabitants of the islands will sooner cease to ship cloth from China, which costs them their wealth, than cloth of their own country, since they possess it for the gathering, or their Indians pay tributes in it. And for these and other reasons which might be presented, and which will be very evident to your illustrious Lordship in Nueva España as soon as you undertake and investigate the matter, may be inferred the just cause, the readiness, and the need with which the Philipinas ask for the above declaration.

Point fourth

Although the commerce from Perú to Nueva España does not apparently concern Manila, and accordingly it will be

deemed that Manila is not interested in the question whether the suspension laid thereon be continued or removed: proof will first be adduced of the injury which the Philipinas Islands experience from that suspension, and then will be presented some arguments, from the many which exist, for the granting of the permission which was formerly current in that commerce.

It is taken for granted (as is mentioned in the said memorial, no. 80) that at the beginning the commerce of the islands and of Nueva España was free to Perù and to all its ports and provinces, in which two kinds of merchandise were trafficked – that from China, and that from Nueva España. The commerce in the goods from China was prohibited, and consequently that in the commodities of Nueva España has been checked; because, as it was decreed that no ships should go, neither commerce could be carried on. A definite form and limitations were imposed upon the commerce in Chinese goods to Nueva España; but the provinces of that country and of Perù remonstrated against the complete interdiction of the commerce that they had carried on together – representing that, even if the trade in Chinese goods were taken away from them, as being foreign, that in their own products ought not to be forbidden to them. The reasons for this petition being considered just and proper, permission was granted for one ship each year, which should sail from the port of Callao de Lima, and go to that of Acapulco; and this ship was allowed to carry goods to the amount of 200,000 ducados in silver, which should return to Perù invested in the products and

commodities peculiar to Nueva España – whether in agriculture, stock-raising, or manufactures – and in no others, even if they were the exports of these kingdoms; while the prohibition of Chinese cloth remained in force, under greater and more severe penalties. The trade thus permitted, continued uninterruptedly from 1604 until, on account of certain malicious reports, and less attention being paid to that trade than should have been, it was suspended for a period of five years by a royal decree of November 23, 1634. This decree is, for greater clearness, copied here exactly; it is as follows:

“The King. To Marques de Cerralvo, my kinsman, member of my Council of War, and my viceroy, governor, and captain-general of the provinces of Nueva España. For just causes and considerations which have influenced me thereto, and because I have understood that this measure is expedient for my service, I have decided that, for a period of five years, the ship for which permission was granted to the provinces of Perú to go every year with two hundred thousand ducados for their trade shall not go to those provinces [of Nueva España]. For the execution of this decree I have sent to the Conde de Chinchon, the viceroy of those provinces, the orders proper for this, of which I have thought it best to inform you so that, having understood this matter, you will on your side aid, in what concerns you. I charge you to do so, in fulfilment of the aforesaid command, exercising special and vigilant care that there shall be no infraction of the law, so far as concerns that country; and that no merchandise from

China shall be carried from Nueva España to Perú, which is the principal object aimed at. For it is certain that, if in this matter proper care and vigilance be not exercised, whatever is gained by watchfulness and precaution on one road will be diverted by another. At every opportunity that may present itself you shall, without omitting anything, always advise me, with especial care and entire secrecy, how this measure is received by the merchants and trading people of that country; and what advantages or disadvantages result from its execution, in order that, knowing this, I may take such steps and issue such orders in the matter as are most suitable. From Madrid, on the twenty-third day of November in the year one thousand six hundred and thirty-four.

I the King

“By command of the king our sovereign:

Don Fernando Ruiz de Contreras

“Signed by the Council.”

That this suspension of the commerce of Perú is injurious to the Philipinas is notorious. First: because when the ships from Perú do not sail to Acapulco the islands are left exposed to the failure of their [usual] succor in any year when their ships do not make the voyage (as often happens), either by having to take shelter in some port, or being wrecked, or by their late arrival [at Acapulco] – three contingencies which are quite possible, and even usual, as the islands have found by experience. Since in these cases the failure of these ships was formerly made up by those which went from Perú – the necessary supplies of men and

money being sent in those vessels – it follows that if they do not go thither, and the former do not come, there will be no ships for this purpose; and in one year alone, if the islands fail to receive the aid which supports them, they run the risk of being ruined – and this may even occur on an occasion of such exigency and danger that afterward they cannot be relieved at all.¹⁰

Second: because the silk that is produced in Nueva España (both woven and in skeins)¹¹ was exported to Perú, since it was the principal commodity included in this permission, and in

¹⁰ “An indiscreet or ill-directed zeal distracted from labors and persistent effort those colonists, who themselves were inclined to inactivity. Their exceedingly lucrative commerce and intercourse with America accustomed them to regard as intolerable and even disgraceful the most honorable occupations. If through any misfortune the rich Acapulco galleon could not be despatched, or was wrecked, the greater part of the inhabitants lapsed into fearful misery. Many became beggars, thieves, or assassins; it was customary for them to enlist as soldiers; and the courts were unable to check or correct the many crimes committed.” (Malo de Luque, *Establecimientos ultramarinos*, v, pp. 211–212.) Cf. this with Raynal’s *Settlements and Trade in Indies*, iii, p. 78, from which Malo de Luque has again borrowed without giving Raynal credit (see note 7, ante).

¹¹ Silkworms and the cultivation of the mulberry tree, for both of which the country is naturally adapted, were introduced into Mexico by Cortés, and for a time the production and manufacture of silk there promised to become a source of wealth to the country; but it was practically ruined by the restrictive and unfriendly policy of the Spanish government and the competition of the Chinese silks sent to Nueva España from Manila. Mexico has several native species of silkworms, and trees on which they feed – not only of mulberry, but of other genera; and their product was used by the natives before the conquest, especially in Mizteca in Oajaca. For accounts of this product and industry, see Acosta’s *Hist. Indies* (Hakluyt Society’s publications, London, 1880), i, p. 269; Humboldt’s *New Spain* (Black’s translation), iii, pp. 57–60, 465; and Bancroft’s *Hist. Mexico*, ii, p. 292; v, pp. 612, 613; vi, pp. 524, 576.

order to [help meet] the expenses of the country; and Nueva España, not being as rich as Perú, prefers the fabrics from China, which remain at a lower price, so that all those that come from Philipinas find consumption. If, then, the market that they formerly had fails, it is necessary that this [home-grown silk] remain in Nueva España, as being their own product. It follows that so much less will be the use of the silks from China, which were substituted in the place of the Mexican goods when those went out of the country with the trade permitted to Perú. On this account, the commerce of Philipinas has been and is steadily diminishing – to how great an extent may be easily understood by finding the country full of silks and its own fabrics, which are no longer consumed except within it, although foreign goods are brought in. Even if these last are cheaper, they are a hindrance and obstacle to those which are or can be called original [in the country] – an injury which has been already experienced with the last ships from the islands, which as they failed to come in the preceding year, did not find an outlet for their wares; nor could they sell even enough to pay the freight charges and the duties, as is stated in letters from Nueva España, where your illustrious Lordship can learn the facts in the case.

Third: because, although Nueva España has mines of silver – and that metal is obtained from them in the quantity that is known, since the greater part of it all is locked up in the royal treasuries for shipment to España – since much goes out for the ordinary trade of Goathemala, Yucatàn, the Windward Islands,

and the coasts of Cartagena and Venezuela, while the bulk of it is laden for these kingdoms, and even is not sufficient for their trade, it necessarily results that silver is lacking for that of Philipinas, and that the islands feel the loss of the 200,000 ducados that Perù was sending, which make almost 300,000 pesos of silver. This amount is not so small as to be undeserving of attention, and is sufficiently large to explain why, for this and the preceding reasons, the islands have experienced so great a decline in their commerce; and for all those reasons have so much difficulty in supporting themselves, that it obliges them to demand relief by all possible and suitable means. Since one of these is, that the trade permitted to Perù be carried on as it formerly was, the islands urge that its prohibition, or suspension, shall cease and be removed.

And since, besides the advantages which have been mentioned, there are others which support this decision – some on the part of Nueva España, and others on that of Perù – and accordingly it is demanded by both kingdoms, it must be observed that it seems just and necessary that there should be intercourse between them; and that, as they are united naturally and morally, being continuous by the land, subject to one crown, included under the government of one Council, having the same laws, and being of the same nationality (that is, the Castilian), trade and commerce should [not] be totally prohibited to them. Nor, [on the same grounds, should the amount of trade] permitted to them be so limited, as it was, to 200,000 ducados –

which, considering the richness of those countries, was very little; indeed, their intercourse is so restricted that it is less difficult to send a letter from Lima to Mexico by way of Spain than by the route on which it is now carried. And when it has been ordained by royal decrees and by the customary instructions [to royal officials] that the two viceroys of those countries should aid and favor each other when occasions therefor arise, and when they so frequently encounter enemies by sea and disturbances by land, it does not seem consistent that those who should aid and succor each other cannot hold mutual communication.

Another reason: because with this prohibition opportunity is given for greater infractions of the law, or that merchandise which went with registry may go without it; for hardly is there a year when there are not voyages of prelates and ministers from Perú to Nueva España, and from Nueva España to Perú. Very recently Archbishop Don Feliciano de Vega and Auditor Don Antonio de Ulloa went from Lima to Mexico, and the bishop of Nueva Vizcaya (who went to fill the see of La Paz) from Mexico to Lima, as well as the auditors who were transferred from the Audiencia of Mexico to that of Lima. All these have to go by the Southern Sea; and it is quite possible that, by undertaking to sail at different times – and, because each one [of those prelates] prefers to go as a superior in his own ship, different vessels convey them – two ships would go from Lima to Acapulco, and three or four from Acapulco to Lima, without either of the viceroys being able to prevent the shipment of much silver

in the ships from Perù, and much merchandise in those from Nueva España. Moreover, these four or five ships are double that number, because all of them are chartered by the voyage, going or returning; so neither does the Peruvian ship care to remain in Nueva España, nor that from Nueva España in Perù; thus there will be ten ships, five from each country. And all these were rendered superfluous by the ship that belonged to the permitted trade; for since the latter sailed regularly and provided registry, there was sufficient cause for ordaining that the prelates and auditors should journey in it. This is a reason so evident that, even if there were no other, it would be enough for granting and facilitating this commerce.

On behalf of Nueva España, it is mentioned in the said memorial (no. 92) that more than fourteen thousand persons are occupied in the culture of silk, who, if that should fail them, would perish. This industry has two factors: one is, that there be silk from China as raw material [para labrar] and a market for that of the country. If the commerce with Perù fail them, that market (which is their principal one) is cut off; and thus that industry will cease, and the country will lose the wealth that it has which is based on that industry. Moreover, since the trade of the provinces is so closely connected and bound together, that of España will experience the same or a greater deficiency. For, if those who in Nueva España deal in silks, and are engaged in the silk culture and industry, sustained and enriched themselves with the commerce of Perù, and whatever they gained in that direction

converted into the commerce of Castilla – consuming, as they necessarily would, the commodities in which that trade consists – it follows that if the people of Nueva España lack capital, and if that of the 200,000 ducados from Perú fails them, the wealth of Castilla will be thus diminished.

On behalf of Perú it is also represented that, when that permission for one ship each year was granted, this matter was examined and discussed, with reports from the viceroys and audiencias, and the more intelligent of the officials, and the advantages and disadvantages on both sides were carefully considered. Moreover, no new causes have arisen, nor have illegalities occurred [in the commerce] which compel the suspension of a decision so suitable, just, and beneficial. And there have only been the proceedings of Francisco de Victoria,¹² who, without caring for anything except to make himself singular and conspicuous, and to show himself capable of what he least understood – with the desire which many have to improve the government, even though it be by ruining the countries – in affairs belonging to the commerce of Philipinas and that of Perú strayed so far from what was fundamental and requisite in them, as may be seen in the arguments in the said memorial, nos. 1 and 2, and from 93 to 119. And, granting for the sake of argument that this [course of action] might have had some foundation: if the suspension of this permission was for five years, either for the

¹² On fol. 24 verso of the Extracto, the surname Barahona is added to this man's name as here given.

punishment of illegal acts, or for reasons at the time expedient, when these requirements are fulfilled, it seems just that those commences should again continue as before.

Another: because this becomes more expedient in the present emergencies, in which those kingdoms desire to help meet the new impositions which have been levied in all of them since the year 1630: the union of the armies, the windward armada, the sale of new offices, the half-annat, the stamped paper, the increase of the avería on both seas, the incorporation and reduction of encomiendas in both kingdoms, and other matters, which are well known to your illustrious Lordship. And if [his Majesty's] vassals are not favored in these exigencies by facilitating their commerce, it will be impossible for them, even though they desire it (as they all do), to aid in bearing so great a load.¹³

¹³ Under the rule of Felipe III and Felipe IV, the economic and financial affairs of Spain fell into a ruinous condition. The indolence and incompetency of those monarchs, the influence exercised over them by unscrupulous favorites, the rapid increase of absolutism and bureaucracy, the undue privileges accorded to the nobility and clergy, costly and useless wars, the extravagance and corruption which prevailed in the court and in the administration of the entire kingdom and the expulsion of the Moriscos – all these causes quickly brought on an enormous national debt, the impoverishment of the common people, depopulation of large districts, almost the ruin of manufacture and the like industries, the oppression of the poor, the trampling down of the national liberties, the decline of Spain's naval and military power, and many other evils. The treasures of the Indies did not suffice to maintain the nation, and even caused some of its woes; and the reckless mismanagement of its revenues caused enormous deficits, which its rulers attempted to meet by imposing more and heavier taxes, duties, and contributions upon a people already staggering under their

Another: because this permission was granted to Perù in recompense for what was taken away from that country in the goods from China. That trade was free, as I have said, and those stuffs were shipped from Nueva España in abundance; and thus the provinces of Perù experienced great relief, as the Chinese goods were so cheap that those of Castilla were estimated at three times their price. It was expedient to prohibit the Chinese goods, in order that the commerce of España might not diminish for lack of the wealth of Perù. And, since the welfare of some vassals is not to be gained by destroying the others, in order to repair the loss which was caused by this prohibition to the vassals of Perù permission was granted to them for 200,000 ducados in goods from Nueva España, which are not so cheap as those of China, nor so dear as those of Castilla. This is stated in the royal decrees for the concession, and is inferred from their being of the same year and date as those for the prohibition. If this was the cause, and now it does not cease to operate, but rather is still more active – on account of the commodities which go from España having greatly increased in price, the land being poorer, and the impositions, expenses, and losses being heavier – it may be easily understood that this permission ought not to be refused.

grievous burdens. The impositions named in the text are but a few of those levied at that time; and the colonies were compelled to bear their share of the burden carried by the mother-country. See the excellent survey of this period in Spanish history, and of conditions political, administrative, social, and economic, with bibliography of the subject, in Lavisse and Rambaud's *Histoire générale* (Paris, 1893–1901), v, pp. 649–682.

Again: because the principal argument which gave cause for the suspension of this permission was the representation of glaring infractions of law therein. Sufficient refutations to these were made in the said memorial, from no. 94 to 117; but as there they are mingled with those in the commerce of the islands, answer is [here] made to the former more than to the latter (although the one depends on the other). The exaggerated statement is made that the ship which goes every year from Perú to Acapulco carries, instead of the 200,000 ducados of the permission, three millions – an enlargement which is an act of audacity deserving punishment rather than complaisance. [This is preposterous:] first, because even in transgressions of this character there is usually some moderation; and never before has it been seen, heard, or supposed that where two [pesos' worth] were permitted the amount concealed would reach thirty. Second, this ship which went to Acapulco was one of 200 toneladas. The galleons on the India route, which go only to carry silver, and are of 600 to 800 toneladas, do not carry more than one million each year; and the capitana and the almiranta, which are larger, carry a little more. Therefore, if a galleon of 800 toneladas does not carry a million and a half, how could a ship of 200 toneladas carry three millions? Third, it may be asked why all that money went to Nueva España. Reply will be made, "with the royal decree for the permission," and with the argument (which is very evident) that the money went thither for investment in merchandise, and not to be left there, or to come

by that route to España; for the one would be folly for its owners, and the other a blunder, since it would involve greater costs and risks. Then if (as is evident) the money must return invested, and in the same ship, or in another of equal burden, who ever said or imagined that that ship, with a burden of 200 toneladas, can carry the investments of three millions? If this sum be in silver, it is impossible to do so, as is proved; but the same is true if it be in merchandise. The ships which come from Eastern India to Lisboa are of 1,500 toneladas, and some of 2,000; and whatever goes beyond a million in the entire lading is very profitable, and is largely composed of diamonds, rubies, civet, and musk, commodities which are not bulky. Then how could a ship of 200 toneladas carry a cargo of taffetas, velvets, silk in skeins, coverlets, beds, tents, cabinets, and other like articles, to the extent of three millions of investment, which in Perú would be four or five millions? Fourth, because it cannot be said that the ship, since it does not carry three millions of silver, will carry two millions, or one – which also is a great transgression of the limit set. It is proved by experience that neither three nor two millions, nor one, nor [even] half a million can be invested in [the cargo of] a ship of 200 toneladas – which with 200,000 ducados of silver converted into merchandise (which in Perú will be worth 300,000), and with the people, and supplies for three months (the time spent in going from Acapulco to Callao de Lima) will sail so well laden that no considerable quantity can be carried outside of the registry. Fifth, and last, because if this ship carried

three millions, we must find a source for this silver, and a halting-place for it. There is no source [for that amount], because the silver produced from the mines of Perù, whether computed at a little more or less, is shipped to España every year, without an error of three millions. But if Perù retained so much silver, if from the year 1636 no ship has gone to Acapulco (and it is not to be supposed that the merchants keep their funds idle) from that time the exports from Perù would be heavier; but if we abide by experience (which is in this matter the best proof), the opposite is well-known. As little is a halting-place found for that silver, since [what there is] remains in Perù, on account of not having permission. Finally, we say, and it is known, that no more silver comes [from Perù] than did formerly, nor even as much. When it was going to Nueva España, the necessary effect of carrying three millions would have been to engross both the commerce of that country with Castilla and that with Philipinas; that those two should share the greater part of the silver; and that, when it ceased, both should feel the lack. The trade of Philipinas has had less return than formerly, not for lack of silver, but because Don Pedro de Quiroga did not give them permission to ship the returns for two years, and therefore the silver remained in Nueva España for that reason. As little has the commerce of Castilla experienced a considerable reduction, and not one in proportion to the lack of Perù's millions; and thus is proved that this permission for Perù never had the infringements that are represented, either in the quantity that is stated, or in any other

considerable amount. [It is clear] that it ought to be decreed that, since the [term of the] suspension imposed upon that commerce is completed, it shall again proceed as is demanded in behalf of Philipinas, and has been requested on behalf of Mexico and Lima – the matter being referred to the investigation of your illustrious Lordship, who, after considering the reasons here mentioned, will decide it with the perspicuity and equity that the matter demands.

His Majesty has also given commission to your illustrious Lordship that, having heard the citizens in regard to the claim which they make of not being included in the two compositions of 630,000 pesos, the share of it which was levied upon them may be returned to them; since his Majesty says in his royal decree that he does not wish them to pay what they do not owe. Since all the considerations and arguments are fully stated in the said decree, I will, in order not to weary your illustrious Lordship, refer you to it, which also is very convenient, as will be seen, in serving to throw much light upon the affairs which your illustrious Lordship has to arrange and settle.

Informatory decree regarding the question to what extent and on what plan shall the commerce of the islands with Nueva España hereafter proceed

The King. To the reverend father in Christ, Don Juan de Palafox y Mendoza, bishop of the cathedral church of the city of Puebla de los Angeles, member of my royal Council of the Indias, to whom I have entrusted the visitation of my royal Audiencia of the City of Mexico in Nueva España, and of its tribunals, and that of the port of Acapulco: on the part of Don Juan Grau y Monfalcòn, procurator-general of the distinguished and ever loyal city of Manila, the capital of the Philipinas Islands, he has in the name of that city presented to me a statement that, having set forth to me in another memorial the wretched condition in which those islands are, and offered various petitions regarding it, which have been examined in the said my royal Council of the Indias, they failed to come to a decision in the principal points, not only on account of their importance, but in order to wait for the despatches which they were expecting to come in the trading fleet. And among those which arrived with the fleet from Nueva España there were letters from the city of Manila and the governor of Philipinas, and from certain intelligent persons, all of which agree – in which, to judge from

the condition of affairs, those islands were in evident risk of being ruined unless the relief which they needed were sent to them with the utmost promptness, by helping to give form to their commerce, on which is based their preservation and defense, in the returns of silver, in the succors [that they receive] in fighting men, and in aid from the seamen [who go there]. The said city of Manila and the governor, as men who so carefully bear in mind the losses [that the commerce has experienced] mention them in their letters; and the commissaries of the city (who reside in Mexico), with even more information of what the people of the said city did not know, have considered and noted these letters, since the remonstrances which the citizens have made were caused only by having received some information in general of the cruel acts of Don Pedro de Quiroga [y Moya], and that he had prohibited 600,000 pesos to the commerce. And when they knew that, besides the previous acts of oppression, others had been so recently committed against them, and such as had never before been known, and another sum of 300,000 pesos taken from them, it can be judged what they suffered, and the affliction that they experienced. And [I desire] that always, and in whatever event, it may be seen and known that the said Don Juan Grau gave information of and proposed to me all that he considered expedient for preventing the loss of the said islands, which with so plain indications is menacing them, and ought to be feared – as it is feared, not only by their citizens, but by all who recognize the difficulty of preserving them without

commerce, or money, or soldiers, or seamen – continuing in his obligation, which is to communicate what shall be written to him, to present such requests as the said city shall order him to make, and to urge forward the decision of the most important matters. And he regards as settled that the commerce of the said islands with Nueva España is permanent, which is the only way in which they can be maintained, as he has proved in the said memorial; and that, if it ceases, they will be ruined and the Dutch enemy will take possession of them, since for so many years they have with this desire harassed the islands. [He makes the following statements:] If they should succeed therein (which may God not permit) all Eastern India would perish – since, if the enemy should be master of the Straits of Sincapura, and of the archipelagos of Moluco and Luzòn (which have for their defense only that which Manila and its armed fleets give them), all the commerce of China would necessarily be hindered, not only for the Castilians but for the Portuguese; and the factories which (without other power than that of the commerce and advantage of many nations which resort to them), I possess in those coasts and kingdoms, with which I have preserved and sustained them, would come to an end. And the commerce of the said islands is at present suspended, if not cut off, as appears from the letters of the city of Manila and the governor. It must be noted that three-fourths of the merchandise which the citizens are accustomed to trade is pledged to the Sangleys, since the commerce has hitherto been sustained on credit alone; and as in the past year of 1636–

37 no money went from Nueva España from the goods which the citizens sent, which the Sangleys had sold on credit, they have not been able to satisfy these claims. For this reason the Sangleys have gone away, and say that they are not willing to lose more than what they have lost; and the Portuguese of Macàn have done the same – who, like the Chinese, have returned to their own country, ruined. And the citizens having refused, in the past year of 1636, to lade their goods in the two ships which were ready to sail, fearing (and with good cause) the severity of Don Pedro de Quiroga, the governor urged them to lade their goods, and those which they had procured on credit – assuring them in my name that these would be expedited at Acapulco in the same manner as formerly, for which purpose he ordered that all the goods should be registered with the utmost possible exactness and equity. The effect of this was, that Don Pedro de Quiroga paid no attention to what the governor had promised in my name; instead, his harsh nature being thereby irritated, he displayed greater severity, and, not content with detaining whatever the ships carried, he weighed and opened registered bales and chests – contrary to the usage at all the ports, against the regulations provided by royal decrees; and the appraisement that he made of the merchandise was so increased and exorbitant that what was at its just price in Mexico worth 800,000 pesos he rated at four millions. For the commodities which in Manila cost at the rate of nine pesos, the said Don Pedro appraised at twenty-two; and much of the cloth was sold in Acapulco, in his

very sight, at six pesos, while he had collected the full amount of the royal dues, on the basis of twenty-two, at which he had valued the goods. By this one may judge how considerable a loss the citizens experienced, not only in paying the dues on so increased a valuation, but in the loss of the money they had invested. It may easily be judged that, by making this valuation so contrary to justice and reason, the registers transgressed the permitted amount; and with this appraisement he began to inflict new and hitherto unknown injuries on the commerce, with the sole intent of obtaining another composition, and demanded for it 500,000 ducados. God permitted that he should die; but, on account of his death, what he had begun was continued by the marqués de Cadereyta, and continued with no less severity. For he forcibly extorted from the commerce 300,000 pesos, which the citizens did not owe according to the document that they signed at the time of their first agreement; and he made them draw up a document regarding the commerce, with declarations at the start that they had not entered protest against signing the document for the 300,000 pesos, by which act they left themselves no recourse. In order to relieve themselves from these annoyances they signed the said obligation, although they knew that it was the utter ruin of the commerce; but with this, and the damages and losses that their property suffered – for, besides opening the packages, they remained several days on the beach, with guards, and other expenses – not only their profit but their principal was consumed. Another factor in this loss

was the necessity of securing what belonged to the islands out of the 600,000 pesos of the first composition; and for this, and the composition of 300,000 pesos, with the half-annat (which is charged to them), they were obliged to take moneys at a loss, and to sell very cheaply the goods that had remained. The result was, that of all the investment for the said year of 1636, when the entire capital of the citizens of the islands was sent, there remained no considerable amount that could be returned to them – as they were informed by the commissary through whose hand the returns were sent. On account of this – even before the second condemnation of the 300,000 pesos, or all the unfortunate outcome of their investments, was known in Manila – the citizens who had some estates in the country, seeing their extreme necessity, asked the governor's permission to go out [of the city] to live on their lands, with the little money that remained to them, by cultivating the soil to support themselves. The rest, who are poor, have asked permission to enlist in the army as soldiers, and to join expeditions, or go to Terrenate, as they can find no other means of support; and the majority of the citizens were discussing whether to entreat me that I will be pleased to grant them permission so that they can return to these kingdoms, to die in their own countries, as they can no longer support themselves in the Philipinas – but the governor, having notice of this, persuaded them to ask me for relief in this their afflicted condition, which they have done. Accordingly, they assembled in an open session of cabildo, and agreed that, until I should

be pleased to form and establish a definite plan for the said commerce, no one of them should lade or send to Nueva España any merchandise, whether in great or small quantity – with which the said commerce has entirely ceased and been suspended, and will remain in that condition until a decision shall be sent them in regard to its plan. [They say] that, if this be delayed, it may arrive at a time when already no remedy will avail; that, although the citizens of Manila know that this course may ruin themselves and their islands, they consider it less injurious to them to spend their funds in maintaining what they may hereafter acquire, than in sending them to Nueva España in order to complete the loss of these in one year. They have acted accordingly, since in a patache which the governor despatched in the year 1637, with information of these necessities and of others contained in their letters, there came no merchandise, nor was there any person who was willing to ship goods; and the same occurred with the two ships which were despatched in the past year of 1638. And although the governor made all possible efforts to constrain the citizens to lade the two ships, he could not succeed in this, which now causes them to feel their loss still more keenly. It is evident that the foregoing alone will cause a greater loss of duties to my royal exchequer in Nueva España, besides the licenses of the Sangleys, and other things in Manila and Nueva España, than what has been gained for it by the 900,000 pesos of the said two compositions – not to mention the evident risk in which the islands remain; for, if they are lost, four millions will not be

enough to recover them if the Dutch take possession of them, which is the principal object at which they aim. It is represented to me that, if that commerce flourishes, my duties in Nueva España on the merchandise will amount to about 300,000 pesos, with which was provided the amount which I ordered to be sent back as returns to Manila, for the purposes and preservation of those islands; and that now all that source of income has fallen at a blow, and the loss has recoiled upon my royal exchequer, since it is necessary that the amount of money which is conveyed every year for the succor of those islands be supplied from my royal treasury of Mexico to that of Manila, out of the silver and the fifths from the mines. And not only is this loss occasioned, but all the capital with which commerce was carried on from Mexico to Philipinas (to which the duties gave rise) has ceased to exist; for in the year 1638, when no ships save one patache came [to Acapulco] the dues from it amounted to [only] 4,000 pesos, and in 1639 another 4,000 pesos were collected from the almiranta which arrived at Acapulco. As the citizens of Manila had no means to lade merchandise, not only the patache but the almiranta came without registers – as also did the capitana, which had to go back to port. According to what the governor writes, he will not send ships in the year 1640; with this, in three years I shall have lost 900,000 pesos in duties – the same amount which was extorted as composition, against all reason and justice, by Don Pedro de Quiroga; and it is he who has caused, by his severe measures, these so irreparable losses, not only to my

royal exchequer but to the commerce. [Don Juan Grau] entreated me that, since all the above matters are worthy of such careful attention, I would be pleased, in order to place a speedy check on these losses – which recoil upon my royal exchequer, as he represented to me – to furnish a plan for the said commerce, without entrusting the matter to any judge or official visitor, or waiting for reports on a matter which is so thoroughly explained and well understood, in which even one year's delay is enough to render relief impossible, to judge by the condition in which those islands now are. [He asks that,] in case this is impracticable, I command that for six or eight years the usage that has prevailed in regard to the registration and the appraisement and all the rest be followed, without making changes in anything, punishing those who transgress the regulations and orders that have been established by royal decrees; and that this may and shall be understood without prejudice to what must and shall be decreed after the documents, reports, and other papers which shall be demanded or sent have been examined. [He asks that] I immediately despatch a decree to this effect, since, if a decision on this point be not at once sent, the commerce will be ruined in one year more – which, added to what has been already lost, will be the total destruction of the said islands. This subject has been discussed in my royal Council of the Indias, and I have taken into consideration all that has been represented to me, and that it is just to reward the loyalty, fidelity, and services of vassals who are continually serving me, arms in hand – defending

my crown in lands so widespread, with so great reputation for my arms; and I desire in everything their prosperity, comfort, and preservation. By my decree of September 30 last I thought best to command that in the appraisements and registrations, and in not opening the bales or weighing the chests from the ships of the said Philipinas Islands which arrive at Acapulco – unless such act shall be preceded by the informations and other requisites that are ordained by decrees that have been issued on this subject – the custom and usage which were in vogue before Don Pedro de Quiroga went [there] should be observed, without infringing the decrees and orders which were issued regarding these matters; and that this be for the present, and meanwhile nothing else be ordained by the said my Council until you shall have informed me (as you will do) about the affairs of Philipinas, since I have entrusted to you the settlement and enforcement of matters concerning the commerce of the said islands. I request and charge you, [for all these reasons,] to inform me about all that I have here mentioned, with great distinctness and thoroughness, with your opinion and any suggestions that you can offer regarding the advantages and the preservation of the said Philipinas Islands – in order that, after the matter has been examined in the said my Council, I may take such measures as are most expedient. Done at Madrid, February 14, 1640.

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