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Plants of the Philippines

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digenization, continuity, aim of mission, theology of mission, conversion, etc. are necessarily subject to change with the advance of knowledge. But they do offer the present position of the problems, with indications of the trends for the immediate future.

Normally Protestants know more about Catholic mission history and theology than Catholics know about Protestant mission. This is especially true in the Philippines. Until 1898 and the end of the Spanish regime Protestant missionaries were not welcome here. Consequently the Filipino people have known Protestant mission activity for only the past 70 years; further, since when they arrived the Catholic Church was already strongly rooted among the people, Protestant mission work has not been very successful in numbers.

But it would be erroneous to conclude from this experience at home that the same situation prevailed in other places. Protestant mission in Indonesia, Korea, India, China, Japan, the South Pacific, etc. made progress, and not rarely their numbers and works surpassed Catholic mission activity. For example, one need only consult the article on William Carey to see how ardently the missionaries learned Asian languages to present the gospel message through them. James Legge (1815-1897) likewise so mastered Chinese language and literature that his English translations of Confucius, Mencius and other classical writers, in five huge volumes, are still treasured today.

In summary, this book is written largely by Protestant authors on predominantly Protestant mission persons and interests. In this, in addition to the themes common to both Catholics and Protestants, lies its value for catholic students of history and theology. It gives them in handy reference form fundamental information on hundreds of themes, and offers a vast panorama for understanding Protestant mission yesterday and today. Though the articles on Catholic mission are fewer, one can readily retort that hardly any Catholic books on mission give proportionately as much attention to Protestant mission history and theology. As it stands, it is an important event both for ecumenism and for mission, and deserves commendation. It is a pleasure also to praise it for its price; despite the size, its cost compares favorably with many a slimmer modern volume.

FRANCIS X. CLARK, S.J.

PLANTS OF THE PHILIPPINES. The Science Education Center, University of the Philippines. Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1971. vii + 512 pp.

Plants of the Philippines is a milestone in Philippine botany. Whereas most books on the subject were written by foreigners, this book

is the result of the efforts of an impressive team of Filipino scientists, among whom are Dr. José V. Santos, Prof. Consuelo V. Asis, Dr. Flor-deliz Uyenco, Dr. Gregorio Velasquez, and Dr. Prescillano Zamora.

The book is not comprehensive, but it treats many topics about Philippine plants which should interest teachers, students and laymen alike. The bibliography is comprehensive and up-to-date. The book has three parts. The first part introduces the reader to the nature of flowering plants and their taxonomy or classification, Philippine vegetation, and includes a chapter on their conservation. The second part is about the higher plants, those of economic value, the weeds (with tips on their propagation and care). The third part deals with the lower plants, like bacteria, fungi, lichens, algae, and ferns. In the presentation of these topics, the reader is introduced to the approved scientific method of taxonomy, isolation, and culture of different plants.

The book will serve either as a source book or as a reference manual for high school teachers teaching the biological sciences, considering the valuable information which the text provides to enrich the background knowledge of the teachers. The book will also be found useful in college classrooms as an introductory text in courses on Economic Botany.

All throughout the book the authors do not hesitate to point out the economic importance of Philippine plants. Most college manuals in Botany today have been produced abroad, so that instructors are forced to use foreign specimens, e.g., the peach, plum, apricot as examples of a drupe or the oak tree to illustrate a deliquescent type of branching. *Plants of the Philippines* however is replete with local examples.

The book will also find acceptance among laymen, horticulturists, dietitians and hobbyists because of the variety of topics discussed in the book. For instance, they will be happily surprised to know that the rind of lanzones is a mosquito-repellent, that the avocado seed is a source of ink for lettering fabrics, that an enzyme extracted from latex of papaya contains a meat tenderizer called *papain*. In addition, the writers have succeeded in removing methodological or academic technicalities, and de-emphasizing the scientific jargon by using the common names of plants in the Philippine vernaculars.

Visitors who come to the Philippines have pointed out two things: 1) that we lack a guide-book on Philippine plants, 2) that the general run of Filipinos are not tree-conscious. *Plants of the Philippines* could well be this guide-book. It may also serve to awaken an appreciation for Philippine plants, specially at a time when all should be concerned with the conservation of Philippine forests.