

# philippine studies

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## **Legislation for the Layman: The Congressman of the Philippines**

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commander to soldiers whose loyalty and respect he has won. There is something exciting in a fighter who refuses to lose hope in the face of great odds, in a general who shares his men's struggles to the full, in the ascetic who, as he refuses to accept the possibility of defeat in his endeavor to restore paganism, practices the severest bodily discipline in a world given to luxurious excess.

*Julian the Apostate* is crammed with concrete historical data. There is sufficient material both for the layman and the scholar. Father Ricciotti offers a knowledgeable grasp of his subject and an orderly style. As a matter of fact, one is hardly conscious of style, for here art has concealed art and the spotlight is without doubt on Julian.

MARIA TERESA COLAYCO

## LEGISLATION FOR THE LAYMAN

**THE CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES: A Study of its Functions and Powers and Procedures.** By Juan F. Rivera. Manila: Pedro B. Ayuda and Company, 1962. viii, 858 pp.

It is through the legislative process that the will of the people is fundamentally expressed, and the appellation "government by the people" actualized. The legislature is a body of representatives elected by the people to work out the fate of the nation and to arrive at feasible solutions to its numerous local and national problems.

There is more to legislation and the legislative body than is evidenced by legislative bickerings and animosities. Juan F. Rivera's *The Congress of the Philippines* attempts to correct such a serious misconception. He expresses his aim in his Preface: "to relate law-making to life so that it will take on color for the legislator and not seem cold and arbitrary, and at times conscienceless, but a pulsating, vital part of the Filipino social as well as legal order."

The volume is sufficiently exhaustive to present a substantial view of the legislative process: the functions of government, the history and composition of the Philippine Congress, the intricacies involved in the drafting, presentation and passage of bills, and some of the varied offices which aid the lawmakers in the process of legislation.

While assuming the appearance of a legal text, the volume is essentially a political-science dissertation in treatment. The most interesting part of the book, and by far the most novel and informative, is that on Bill Drafting. The drafting of bills is an important

part of legislation. Poor workmanship in the making of bills could lead to grave consequences. Style and clarity of content are both important, for one follows from the other. Lack of a precise style could lead to disorganization, which in turn could lead to ambiguity. Ambiguity in the law leads to confusion in its interpretation and application. This part of the book could very well compose a separate volume, and should be of general interest, not only to the average citizen, political scientists, members of the bench and bar, but also to the legislators themselves. For that forms part of their function, and it is only in keeping with their position that they should have a clear grasp of the principles and practices of bill-drafting.

In his treatment, the author limits himself to fundamentals. This comes as both a virtue and a defect. Many books discuss too many side issues and lose track of the central point. This book succeeds in maintaining its sense of direction. It seems to suffer, however, in that it still leaves some questions unanswered. One would expect in so thick a volume (858 pp) that the author would touch on the many other offices making up the structure of Congress, and at least define their respective duties and functions. It does not. It likewise steers clear of controversial subject matters which sometimes call for personal reflection (and one is not quite sure whether this is a virtue or a defect).

If a book is to be judged on whether or not it achieves its aim, then it might be said that Rivera successfully realizes his aim to a great extent.

JORGE M. JUCO

## PLAUSIBLE PUPPETS

THE DEVILS. A Play Based on a Book by Aldous Huxley. By John Whiting. New York: Hill and Wang, 1961. 128 pp.

Like Hopkins' *Spelt from Sybyl's Leaves*, *The Devils* (based on Aldous Huxley's *The Devils of Loudun*), resolves the mystery of meaningful human living into a black and white choice. The salvation of Father Grandier, libertine priest, seducer of the innocent Philippe, and finally martyr to the powers of evil incarnated in a score of lesser characters, rests on his eventual acceptance of himself as a sinful creature who must humbly turn to God. But such a simple summary of this play hints at a failure to feel its power. It is a strong play. With the possible exception of one or two passages (see page 21, for example, where Fr. Grandier's prayer strikes this reader as much too formal for a priest), Fr. Grandier emerges from the text