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## **Jesuit Documents: Monumenta Mexicana**

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## JESUIT DOCUMENTS

MONUMENTA MEXICANA. Volume I, 1570-1580. Volume II, 1581-1585. Edited by Félix Zubillaga, S.J. Rome, 1956, 1959. xl,631 and xl,852p.

The second volume of *Monumenta mexicana* is also the 84th volume of the series *Monumenta historica Societatis Iesu*, which has as its aim since its inception in 1894 the publication of documents dealing with the history of the Society of Jesus. In the volumes under review Fr. Zubillaga makes frequent mention of a projected *Monumenta Insularum Philippinarum*, which will certainly be a welcome aid to a well rounded study of Philippine history.

Those familiar with the earlier works of Zubillaga, *Monumenta antiquae Floridae*, *La Florida* and his edition of Alegre's *Historia de la Compañía... en Nueva España*, will find in the *Monumenta mexicana* the same high quality of critical scholarship. Title, date, origin, summary and critical apparatus accompany each document. Most of the documents in Volume I concern the entrance of the Society of Jesus into New Spain and the erection of its first schools and mission stations there. A few, however, concern the Philippines. As early as 1574, the Annual Letter of the Province of New Spain to Superiors in Rome hinted at the possibilities of mission work in the Islands (Doc. 62). The Acts of the Jesuit Provincial Congregation of 1577 record the readiness of the Society to accede to the request of Philip II that Jesuits be sent to the Philippines. "Aviendo hecho instancia el Virey, con orden del Rey, que vayan algunos de los Nuestros a las Philipinas, se embien dos Padres con dos Hermanos, para ayudar a los españoles que allí están, y veer el estado de aquella tierra y avisar dello" (Doc. 112). Letters which concern their journey and early days there are thereafter recorded.

In sharp contrast with the first volume, Volume II contains a great deal more Philippine material. The Index, under *Filipinas*, gives two closely printed columns of references. In a number of letters the writers mention their willingness to push on to Japan and China, for they were at a loss as to what to do. "Si la Compañía no toma a cargo indios o no assienta estudios en Manila, no hai para qué estén allí los de la Compañía, porque no tienen que hacer; porque los hespañoles son muy pocos, y éstos, lo más ordinario, ocupados en tales tratos, que han menester personas de más hancha consciencia que los absuelva" (Doc. 151). The Mexican Provincial Congregation, however, answered quite emphatically in 1585 that no Jesuit was to go from the Philippines to Japan or China. But the *Monumenta Insularum Philippinarum* will no doubt help to throw more light on this problem as well as on all early Jesuit activity in the Islands.

There are several misprints in Volume II, none of which, as far as I could judge, are of importance. One laudable change is made in the second volume. The notes are in Spanish, not Latin, thus putting them within the reach of a greater number of scholars interested in Spanish colonial affairs and their relation with the Society of Jesus.

NICHOLAS P. CUSHNER

## A SUPERB NARRATIVE

THE LIBERATION OF THE PHILIPPINES: Luzon, Mindanao, the Visayas, 1944-45. The History of United States Naval Operations in World War II. Volume XIII. By Samuel Eliot Morison. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1959. 338p., Illus. \$6.50.

The things lost in war are always precious ones. Among them are memories: the facts, the personal experiences, the many cross-threads and intangibles with which a historian, especially a naval one, must weave a fabric of solid cloth. Memories fade in their vividness and clarity; facts once known and recorded can be lost or forgotten; experiences suffer the fading fate of memories. And so when the time comes for someone to speak in print that "this is how it was, how it happened, and why", there must come a sense of frustration that somewhere, somehow, something is missing. A broken vase can never be put together whole; a tiny sliver is always missing, and cannot be found again. This is one of the minor but important tragedies of war, as it is of life itself. It is a particular tragedy to the painstaking historian, and I am sure Admiral Morison, who takes infinite pains, will say "amen" to that.

This latest volume, the thirteenth in Admiral Morison's *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II*, deals not only with the liberation of the Philippines following the operations in Leyte Gulf but also includes the operations in Borneo, the supporting (but always silent and separate) submarine operations of 1945, and the even more obscure doings of the U.S. Naval Group, China, known as the "Rice-Paddy Navy".

There is another frustration, I am sure, to a war historian and that is the fact that so many events are taking place at the same time that it becomes difficult to isolate one set of happenings from another and arrange the whole in neat categories. I have always felt that somehow or other Admiral Morison's series has suffered from that in some respects. Yet how could he have done otherwise if he wanted to make a good story? And all his historical writings are eminently good stories. Any other historian might have said: