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Christians Under Stress: The Age of Martyrs

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engagingly written and exudes wit and grace if not always accurate information.

Since this does not pretend to be a scholarly study, certain naive generalizations will have to be overlooked, such as that the Burmese are perpetually happy, that Cambodians live in Utopia, that Indonesia is the third biggest democracy in the world, and that Filipinos generally flatter Americans.

One must also smile politely, forbearing comment, when the *rigodón de honor* is Frenchified into *rigodon d'honneur*; when the *patadiong* is put down as the national dress of Filipinas; and when the Philippines is said to have been converted to Christianity in the *fifteenth* century. What after all is a hundred years more or less to the readers of HOLIDAY?

The chapter on the Philippines concentrates on three topics: the pagan tribes of Northern Luzon, the Muslim communities of Southern Mindanao, and Manila. There is apparently nothing in between. The attitudes, values and idiosyncrasies of present-day Filipinos are seen — as through a glass darkly — in a poem which Mr. Zulueta da Costa wrote in the early thirties. One hesitates to gauge the accuracy of the author's observations on other lands by the accuracy of her observations on our own.

ANTONIO G. MANUUD

CHRISTIANS UNDER STRESS

THE AGE OF MARTYRS: CHRISTIANITY FROM DIOCLETIAN TO CONSTANTINE. By Giuseppe Ricciotti. Tr. by Anthony Bull, C.R.L. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1959. viii, 350p. \$4.95.

The period beginning with the coming of Diocletian (A.D. 284) and ending with the death of Constantine (A.D. 337) is shorter than an ordinary lifetime, but it is crowded with decisive events. When it began, Christianity was a somewhat disreputable religion subject to sporadic persecutions. At the period's end, Christianity had become thoroughly respectable and was no longer contending with hostile emperors but with two of the greatest heresies: Arianism and Donatism. The book under review presents this period to "historians and generally educated people." It is hard to imagine what new facts or interpretations it might hold for historians; generally educated people can at least find in it a few hours of interesting reading.

The style is simple narration without benefit of footnotes. However, a section captioned "Sources" (pp. 292-95) mentions enough documents to give "generally educated people" the feeling that they

are in the hands of a capable historian. The paragraphs are numbered; cross-references enable the reader to follow the fortunes of his favorite characters through the confusing tangle of events. The index is highly detailed.

Diocletian's reign is presented as a complex web of good intentions, intrigue, and superstition. These issue into the famous persecutions. The behavior of ancient Christians under stress is similar to that of modern Christians under similar stress. The reader meets the same cowards, rash enthusiasts, heroes who can be so casual in their death; then there are those who seem too bewildered to become either heroes or traitors. There is at least a minimum of competence in the description of the battles between Maxentius and Constantine. The story of the *labarum* is treated with appropriate sophistication. Finally, the reader is shown how a heretical upheaval is the result of a dynamic juxtaposition of love for truth, misunderstanding, humility, arrogance, and politics which we shall have always with us.

This is not a great book, but it is worthwhile reading. At least it enables one to spend a few moments with the early Christians. Those among them who remained loyal make good company for the harassed Christians of our mid-twentieth century.

ROQUE FERRIOLS

PRESIDENT SINCO'S SPEECHES

EDUCATION IN PHILIPPINE SOCIETY. By Vicente G. Sinco. Quezon City: University of the Philippines Publication Office, 1959. ix, 186p.

It is an exaggeration to say, as some of his reporters have, that President Sinco "lambasts", "flays", "inveighs against" or gives a "terrific drubbing" to educational policies and procedures in this country. But firmly and with a proper degree of academic calm he points out the obvious defects in the University of the Philippines and in other universities and schools and suggests the obvious remedies. He is against the overemphasis on vocational or technical training in the schools and colleges, against proliferation of courses and the weakening of the liberal arts program, and in general against the neglect of the primary objective of formal schooling which is the development of the intellect of the student. He rejects the theories of "progressive education" and the "life-adjustment" school and urges a return to sanity. His positive objectives are those of the Philippine Association for Basic Education which, under his inspiration, is now coming into being.