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Roll of Honor: Dictionary of Philippine Biography by E. Arsenio Manuel

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but their preoccupation is not with concupiscent flesh. If, therefore, the fastidious will find some of these stories painful to read, the moralist will at least not find them objectionable.

In point of technique, these stories are excellent—except, perhaps, the first two: the first (“Children of the Ash-covered Loam”) seems insufficiently focused, and the second (“Lupo and the River”) seems soggy with detail. But there is one story which appears to this reviewer as superior to the rest. It is called “The Blue Skull and the Dark Palms.” It is in this story alone that the author seems to have drawn a character with sympathy and with affection.

Not all of these stories are laid in primitive surroundings. The one just mentioned (“The Blue Skull”) is laid in a little provincial town, and “Where’s My Baby Now?” — delicate bit of satire—is laid in the city.

One notes with satisfaction that several of these stories were previously published abroad—in America or in England: in *The Sewanee Review*, *The Hopkins Review*, *The Pacific Spectator*, *Stanford Stories*, and *Life and Letters*. We congratulate Professor Gonzalez on his share in bringing the attention of the English-speaking world to the existence of a Filipino literature in English.

MIGUEL A. BERNAD

ROLL OF HONOR

DICTIONARY OF PHILIPPINE BIOGRAPHY. By E. Arsenio Manuel. Quezon City: Filipiniana Publications, 1955. Pp. xiii-511. P40.00

This is the first volume of a projected five-volume work of Mr. E. Arsenio Manuel of the Faculty of the University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City.

There are in this volume one hundred and fifty-five biographies, averaging some two or three pages. There are a few rather long studies: T. H. Pardo de Tavera has the longest, running to thirty pages; Nicanor Abelardo’s runs to twenty-eight (but is largely a list of his compositions with the score of one unpublished piece); Juan Crisostomo Soto, the Pampanga writer, has sixteen pages;

Manuel Artigas y Cuerva eleven; Victorino Carreon eleven; Resurrecion Hidalgo, the painter, eleven pages with three plates; Diego Silang, nine pages.

In his introduction the author explains the criteria which guided him in his choice of subjects. First of all, he excluded all persons still alive. Secondly, the subject should have "contributed significantly to Philippine life or progress in any of its varied aspects or to the welfare of the Filipino people, or excelled in some intellectual pursuit, in his or her chosen profession or field, or is remembered for pioneering venture or sacrifice made for the country."

He also says that no test of "religion, race, nationality or creed" entered into the consideration of names chosen. (But this volume seems to indicate a test of nationality. Everybody in it was born in the Philippines and with three or four exceptions had Filipino blood.) He says further that he includes "all leaders of revolts and revolutions... all those who have worked for national freedom or languished for the same... who founded or propagated the Katipunan... members of the Malolos Congress and revolutionary juntas... people who fought abuses... and tyranny... pioneers... those who accomplished something unusual in sciences, arts, professions, commerce and industry, government service, education, sports... plain honest, civic-spirited citizens who advanced the commonweal and worked for the common good."

This volume contains all those accounts which were at this time sufficiently complete for publication, and thus covers the whole range of the alphabet from A to Z. Two other volumes are ready for printing and two more are under preparation. The author promises complete indexes at the end of the work. This first volume has itself an excellent index of persons and subjects as well as bibliographical and genealogical information after each life.

This first part of the *Dictionary* might almost be called a biographical dictionary of Filipinos of the late 19th and early 20th century. Of the 155 subjects all but five were born in the 19th century, and of these 106 were born between 1846 and 1875. Ninety-two died between 1907 and 1937, recently enough for persons to give verbal testimony concerning them. The latest recorded is Justino San Agustin, pioneer printer of Quezon province, who died in 1948. The only victim of the recent war included is Cirilo Perez, husband of Asunción Perez. He was active in guer-

rilla efforts and was put to death by the Japanese at the end of August, 1944. Perhaps the fact that he was also a librarian won him this preferential position from the author. Subsequent volumes ought to find among the heroes of the recent war numerous worthy subjects for biography: Jose Abad Santos, Manuel Colayco, Enrique Albert and a host of others.

This volume is also a kind of history of the Revolution. The author has given the lives of all thirteen "martyrs of Cavite," of the members of the Malolos Congress, and of many generals, soldiers and other prominent figures of the period. In fact the life span of most of the subjects caused a very large percentage of them to play some role in the conflicts. However none of the first names of the Revolution are included (Rizal, Mabini, etc.). Apparently their accounts are not yet ready.

One hundred and ten of the subjects are Tagalogs, and most of these from Manila and environs. There are only six women in the collection. Artists and literary personages are very numerous. There are fifteen painters, sculptors and woodcarvers. In addition there are thirty-two who owe their fame to music, either as composers or performers. Thus 50 or one-third of the total are artists of one kind or another.

There are ten Catholic Bishops and priests in the collection. The Bishops are Juan P. Gorordo and Francisco Reyes. The priests are Cosme Abaya, Anselmo Avanceña, Gregorio Ballesteros, Mariano Dacanay, Mariano Garcia, Mariano Gomez, Mariano Sevilla and Jacinto Zamora.

To give an opinion of such a mass of details one would have to be as familiar with them as the author. On the other hand it is easy to indulge in critical sharp-shooting and pick out little inaccuracies inevitable in any work of such dimensions. The author has given the sources and even annotated them. Therefore the biographies are to be read in the light of them. The fact that so much is derived from verbal testimony, newspaper accounts and the like will suggest an attitude of reserve in some accounts. Relatives and admirers may have acted on the principle of "Nil nisi bonum de mortuis"; and may, moreover, not have been unwilling to shine in the reflected sunlight of their eminent forebears.

If the author will check his sources he will probably find the following points inexact. Nicanor Adonay did not meet his future wife in "La Compañia de Jesus" (p. 37) but probably in the col-

lege of the Beaterio de la Compañia de Jesus. Blessed Pedro Almato, the Dominican Martyr, who is mentioned as a classmate of Eustaquio Prudencio Foz (p. 175) and is said to have been canonized, is not yet declared a saint. Ramon Basa in the text (p. 92) is Roman Basa in the note. The latter is, we believe, correct. Is not Prince d'Odellaski of Rome really Odescalchi (p. 172)? The "Liga Antipornográfica de San Fernando Javier" should be "de San Francisco Javier." (p. 181).

These are questions of fact. I have also one brief pained protest on an expression of opinion. In the life of Marcelo Nepomuceno Mr. Manuel recounts that this artist painted a picture which was judged indecent and was not allowed to be exhibited. The author says: "There were, however, but few brave souls and... the piece was finally rejected..." Is it possible that Mr. Manuel thinks that people object to the exhibition of indecent pictures through cowardice? Is that point of view not oversimplified?

These are relatively small things. But there is one serious defect in certain biographies which Mr. Manuel should strive to correct in subsequent volumes. There are many men in this work who are described as Masons, in fact whose principal claim to fame is that they founded or spread Masonry in the Philippines. No one will object to their inclusion; biographies are concerned with facts, and as a matter of historical fact these men became well known through this activity. But the record should have been complete.

Numeriano Adriano, Deodato Arellano, Hugo Perez, Moises Salvador, Luis Enciso Villa-real and Faustino Villaruel were all executed by the Spanish government for their part in the revolt of 1896. In each biography Mr. Manuel gives an important place to the subject's Masonic activities. Yet the only mention made of retractions of Masonry is a note to Villaruel's account which says, among other things, that Retana prints a retraction, but the note does not say what it is a retraction of. Yet Father Cavanna (*Rizal's Unfading Glory*, pp. 5, 127, 186, 194, 280, 286-288) records retractions of all these men, and for five of them gives photostat copies.

These retractions throw a completely different light on their lives. For example—and especially—Faustino Villaruel is described in the words of Kalaw as "a tireless Mason and a true Apostle of Masonry," who induced his daughter Rosario to become

the first Filipina Mason. Certainly Villaruel's retraction throws revealing light upon this aspect of his life. Villaruel says: "I also repent having belonged to Masonry, having dedicated myself to its spread in these islands and having been a fanatical Mason who went so far as to oblige my two children to enter this society, which I execrate, advising my children... to renounce it."

Rosario, his daughter, followed his advice and retracted Masonry. The retraction exists in her own handwriting and is also reproduced by Cavanna in photostat (p. 275): "I, Rosario Villaruel, sincerely declare that I belonged to the Masonic sect, deceived by some who told me that Masonry was only a beneficent society and that Pope Pius IX had been a Mason and that the Queen of Spain was a Mason."

Space does not permit us to pursue this subject further, but there are a number of other lives and personages in the book who will only be fully understood in the light of the facts reproduced in Cavanna. Mr. Manuel's failure to avail himself of this source and of the references cited therein has led him to publish some portraits which must be adjudged substantially defective.

The book is well printed by the Benipayo Press; the typographical errors are few. Unfortunately the English is rough in many places. It is perhaps too much to expect that the talents of a research scholar and a nice ear for style and idiomatic usage should be found in the same person. In subsequent volumes the author would be well advised to have his manuscript gone over by a style committee.

The price of his volume is ₱40.00, which, considering the prices charged for other local publications, is a bargain. Every reference library will wish to possess it. We look forward to the other volumes, and congratulate Mr. Manuel on this excellent reference work.

LEO A. CULLUM

HUK STORY

THE PHILIPPINE ANSWER TO COMMUNISM. By Alvin H. Scaff. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1955. Pp.ix-165. \$4.00.

Dr. Scaff was sent to the Philippines in 1940 by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to teach at Silli-