

Caroliniana

FRAGMENTS

A COUPLE OF MONTHS from now on a starry night we hope, or can we explain the sudden summer rain, some of you will turn Romans with corsages for your badges and sheepskins for your swords.

Oh you will look lovely, like a poem, beautiful like a song, for you will be the graduates.

But when all the bulbs will have flashed one two three to the sound of cheese you will utter like a prayer, and when all the congratulations will have been shaken hands with; you will remember we hope, those who have shared in the making of your thoughts, your dreams, your becoming, and by the prayers they have prayed, the toils they have made, the sweat they have shed moulded you into better men in thought, in word, and in deed. Before you walk away. For to forget them is to orphan your past, your present, your future, your selves.

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Brother, brother, not only the Yankees are to blame. There's no sense digging up our dead like Dracula and on January walloping up a halloween party. We can mop our hair making up not only a foursome and shout ourselves to kingdom come: you can't do that. And the Yankees will do just that. "Treat us like dirt" and "shoot us like pigs." After all, they're in Rome and they're doing just what the Romans do.

And who are the Romans?

Do you want to know a loud secret?

The Romans Cicero, oh Cicero, are our filipino leaders who condemn us to slow death thru malnutrition and disease because of their indifference to our lot, because of their waste and misappropriation of our funds.

Brother, brother, our placards shall not cry **Go, home Yankee**, or if you do let it be a sentimental journey for sentimental reasons, will you forget our Mt. Mayon? Rather, our placards shall beg:

Stop Shameless Allowances!

Serve, Not Rob The People!

Jobs For The Jobless!

Performances, Not Promises!

Rice, Not Politics!

Otherwise we take up our registered scissors and looking like the matter of fact cut the thread of the Damoclean swords that hang over your necks, come november, come the curtains.

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Truly, when we consider the fact that we are the only Christian nation in the Orient as our banner of distinction in the entire Christian world, we cannot just allow to pass unnoticed the Fourth Centennary of the Christianization of our country.

The Carolinian in purporting to cooperate in her own little way at making this celebration better known and better noticed, especially publish materials which are in one way or another relevant to the affair itself. Some of these are: "A Quadricentennial Challenge for Catholic Philippines", "A Joint Pastoral Letter", "Cebu And The Santo Niño."

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However before we shut up and fall down on our knees, hear.

It's good to see the caterpillars marching back to town to widen the streets and patch up the holes so that the stranger's car won't play too much sungka on our shores.

It's wonderful to see the dutch boy lift up the face of a historic stone affair which has been exhibiting sour gripes for years, or to smell from its sides pittsburg paint hurrah.

It's cute to see the artists polishing up the corrugated halos of angels or applying sand papers to the caricatures of dead saints in order to accentuate the latters' imported, pinched and holy look.

We hope however that not only the avenues or the facades or the saints receive the attention and care of our authorities.

And we are speaking of the beggars and lepers of Cebu.

Sirs, have you been to the Sacred Heart Church, Jakosalem Street friday mornings? Its driveway is lined up with people who have got no nose on their face, no earlobes in their heads, no food in their bellies, no hope in their hearts. With crooked hands that are missing a finger or two, they're been eaten up by the germs, you know, they beg you for a few centavos that will be stretched no doubt to infinitesimal lengths just to meet their needs of subsistence for that week or two.

Sir, have you been to the basilica minor on Sundays? And have you not seen the blind and the lame? They get rhythm from the water cans you know, which they beat like a drum, music from the broken mouth organ which they suck in and out like it were a leg of a chicken fried through and through. The melodies they play are untitled though always lilting and lively as the flies that wing fro and to their ulcerous pores unbandaged: a feeble attempt at injecting into your pipes some festive modes of Sunday, so that noticing the brave contradiction of their condition and tune, you may the more easily unchain the indifference of your heart, and a coin drop into their waiting upturned buri hat.

And no doubt you have seen when you exit through the right door, the lumps of men have got no legs, and only one arm each. They sell tickets you know, Manuel Uy sweepstake tickets which they weakly wave at you who will always be privileged with their pleading look of do you have the heart of a brother.

Sirs, we hope that the Fourth Centennial Celebration of our Christianization tender its meaning for them too, not because it will occasion their carting away to some remote closets though half of them are almost skeletons, but because the Christian Spirit of the Celebration will occasion their decent and humane rehabilitation.

After all, its beggars and lepers are as much part and parcel of Cebu as its historic sights and bric-a-bracs.