

THE JO-DE-RAS CONFERENCE

The week before we Masons gather in Manila for the annual communication from April 23-25, the Jo-De-Ras will meet in Baguio from April 18-21 for their first annual conference. The communication will be attended by Masons and the Jo-De-Ras conference will be attended by young people with Masonic heritage.

The Jo-De-Ras is not a new Order appended to Masonry like the International Order of Rainbow for Girls, or the International Order of Job's Daughters, or the Order of DeMolay. The way we understand it, it does not replace any or all of these Orders, so dear as these Orders are already to Masons and Eastern Stars who have worked so hard to get them going. With the sacrificial and untiring efforts of Masons and Eastern Stars, there are now in the Philippines seven chapters of DeMolay, three assemblies of Rainbow and three bethels of Job's Daughters.

Somewhere along the way, the way of progress and development, the boys and girls of these existing Orders thought it wise to join their efforts in locating their places and functions in a program of community development. They met and talked about what the older generation has been saying about them being a pain in the neck especially during vacation time. They decided that it was time for them to prove that young people are not as bad as they are pictured; that they are not all trouble-making persons; that given the chance, they can do better than just loaf, play and get into trouble.

Hence, the young people of the three Orders decided to meet as a larger group and find ways and means by which they can help their communities. They call themselves the Jo-De-Ras, a convenient combination of names, queer-sounding and without much significance. Their plan however is big and significant. We are not prejudging them. If they are sincere in their aims and objectives, they can succeed. We will wait and see.

We are reminded that this is the first time our young people are trying a program of this type. If in our way of thinking, their project does not rate our financial or moral support, the most we can give them is tolerance. We have it on good authority however, that many Lodges, individual Masons as well as Eastern Stars are giving substantially to their fund for carrying out a successful conference. These Lodges and individuals have the right attitude. May there be more of them.

If these young people can have a successful conference this year, we would even go farther and say that this conference should be an annual event. They should look forward to more conferences, making each conference better than the last. They should subjugate their personal ambitions to the bigger objective of making young people do things better than they are presumed to do. Confidence in them will make them confident in themselves. △