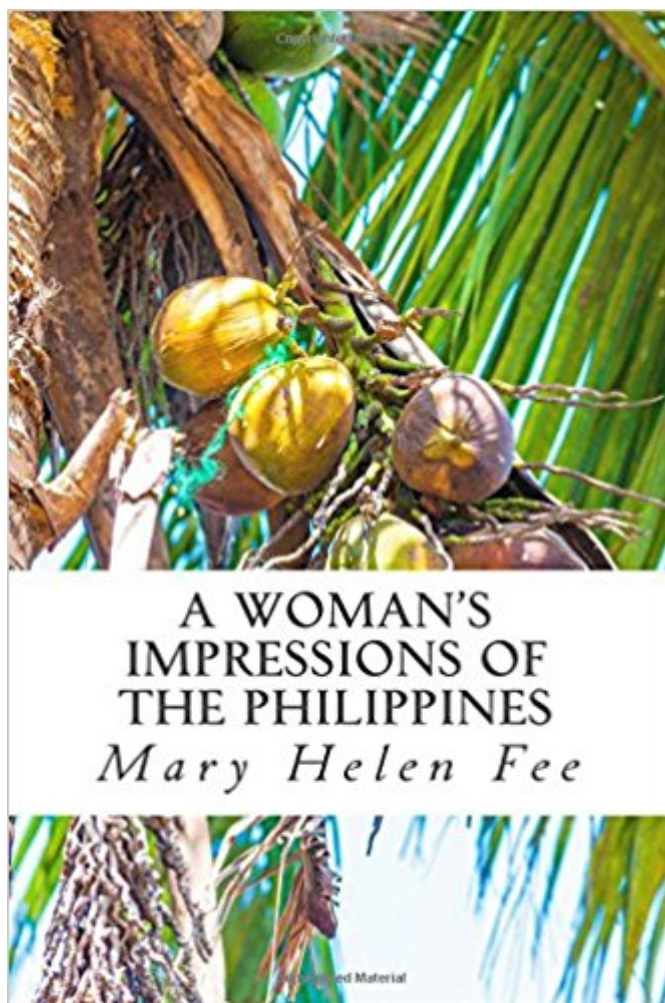


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A Woman's Impressions Of The Philippines



Synopsis

I was much interested in the babies, who were strutting about in their finest raiment and were unquestionably annoyed at its restrictions. Filipino babies are sharp-eyed, black-polled, attractive little creatures. Whether of high or low degree, their ordinary dress is adapted to the climate, and consists usually of a single low-necked garment, which drapes itself picturesquely across the shoulders like the cloaks of Louis the Fourteenth's time seen on the stage. On state occasions, however, they are inducted into raiment which their deluded mothers fancy is European and stylish; but there is always something wrong. Either one little ruffled drawers leg sags down, or the petticoat is longer than the dress skirt, or the waistband is too tight, or mamma has failed to make allowance in the underclothing for the gauziness of the outer sheathing. As for the sashes with which the victims are finally bound, they fret the little swelled stomachs, and the baby goes about tugging at his undesirable adornment, and wearing the frown of one harassed past endurance. Sometimes it ends in flat mutiny, and baby is shorn of his grandeur, and prances innocently back into the heart of society, clad in a combination of waist and drawers which is associated in my memory with cotton flannel and winter nights. Nobody is at all embarrassed by the negligÃ©e; and as for the baby himself, he would appear in the garments of Eve before the Fall without a qualm. After everybody had been served with sweets, a young Filipina was led to the piano. She played with remarkable technique and skill. Another young lady sang very badly. Filipinos have natural good taste in music, have quick musical ears, and a natural sense of time, but they have voices of small range and compass, and what voice they have they misuse shamefully. They also undertake to sing music altogether too difficult for any but professionals.

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